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**A VAGABOND COURTIER**

**VOL. I**

“ Cet homme a fait assez de bruit dans le monde, pour que j'en dise un mot.”

MARGEVINE WILHELMINA OF BAYREUTH.

“ Volupté, volupté, qui fus jadis maîtresse,  
Du plus bel esprit de la Grèce,  
Ne me dédaigne pas, viens t'en loger chez moi,  
Tu n'y seras pas sans emploi ;  
J'aime le jeu, l'amour, les livres, la musique,  
La ville et la campagne, enfin tout ; il n'est rien,  
Qui ne me soit souverain bien. . .”

FONTAINE.







*Karl Ludwig, Freiherr von Pollnitz.*  
*from his Memoirs.*

A  
**VAGABOND COURTIER**

FROM THE MEMOIRS AND LETTERS OF  
BARON CHARLES LOUIS VON PÖLLNITZ

BY

**Mrs. EDITH E. CUTHELL, F.R.Hist.S.**

AUTHOR OF "WILHELMINA, MARGRAVINE OF BAYREUTH,"  
"AN IMPERIAL VICTIM: MARIE LOUISE," ETC. ETC. ETC.

WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE AND 16 OTHER  
ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING SEVERAL FROM THE  
COLLECTION OF MR. A. M. BROADLEY

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## FOREWORD

THE story of Pöllnitz bristles with morals for us moderns ; or it would not have been written. For, beyond the sunny shallows where he basks, the giddy rapids where he whirls, we hear the thunder of the Niagara of Revolution.

For help in tracing his varied career my best thanks are due to the present head of his family, Dr. Max, Freiherr von Pöllnitz ; to the Director of the Royal Prussian Family Archives for hitherto unpublished letters ; and also to Mr. A. M. Broadley for generously placing at my disposal many engravings from his unrivalled collection.

EDITH E. CUTHELL.

GOLDHILL LODGE,  
*May 1913.*



# CONTENTS

## VOL. I

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	xi

## PART I

THE APPRENTICE . . . . .	1
--------------------------	---

## PART II

THE VAGRANT . . . . .	47
-----------------------	----





# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## VOL. I

KARL LUDWIG, FREIHERR VON PÖLLNITZ . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
From his Memoirs.	
	FACING PAGE
PALACE OF CHARLOTTENBURG, BERLIN . . . . .	xii
From a contemporary engraving.	
CHARLES XII OF SWEDEN . . . . .	16
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
FREDERIC, FIRST KING OF PRUSSIA . . . . .	32
SOPHIA, ELECTRESS-DOWAGER OF HANOVER . . . . .	48
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
"MADAME," ELIZABETH CHARLOTTE, DOWAGER-DUCHESS OF ORLEANS . . . . .	64
LOUIS LE GRAND . . . . .	80
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
THE CHÂTEAU OF VERSAILLES . . . . .	96
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
THE SPRING AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE . . . . .	112
From "Les Amusemens des Eaux d'Aix-la-Chapelle, par le Baron de Pöllnitz."	
FREDERIC AUGUSTUS I, ELECTOR OF SAXONY AND KING OF POLAND . . . . .	128
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
LOUIS XV . . . . .	160
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
FREDERIC, FIRST KING OF PRUSSIA . . . . .	176
THE REGENT ORLEANS . . . . .	192
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
OLD DRESDEN . . . . .	208
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
THE CHÂTEAU OF VERSAILLES . . . . .	224
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
ROYAL PALACE, MADRID . . . . .	288
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	
WINTER IN HOLLAND . . . . .	336
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.	



## INTRODUCTORY

### THE DÉBUT

*Time*: the first year of the eighteenth century—a pleasant autumn day.

*Scene*: the first Queen of Prussia's new palace, in its fine gardens, running down to a bend in the Spree.

A recent acquisition this of Sophia Charlotte's. The Grand Master of her Household had built a country-house in the village of Lützelburg, to the west of the city of Berlin, beyond the King's great "hunting garden." It takes the Queen's fancy one day when she drives down to see him; she buys it, and, like all the Kings and Queens in Europe of the moment, begins to build. A severe and stately Renaissance pile has arisen; but Her Majesty is not satisfied. Eosander von Goethe is busy enlarging, adding; but the completion she will not see. Sorrowing, her husband will rename the great palace Charlottenburg.

But to-day all workmen's trowels and mallets are hushed, for Sophia Charlotte is giving a "garden-party" to her pleasure-loving lord and master. Frederic has rumbled over from his suburban "Orange palace" across the river. For the first King and Queen of Prussia are reposing, each in their favourite *villeggiatura*, after the toil of their coronation in far Königsberg—the long mid-winter journey, the lengthy ceremonies, thereunto appertaining.

The King is sitting in his apartment overlooking the gardens Le Nôtre laid out, all in their autumn

beauty. Terrace, straight paths, carp-pond, and canals to the river; square lawns which stiff plants edge in serried rows, while, as sentinels, stand stone vases and trim orange-trees, the latter released from their winter quarters in the huge Orangery close by.

Prussian Majesty, square, bulky, round-faced, round-eyed, heavy-mouthed, expressionless, has awoke from his siesta, after his long and heavy midday meal, considerably less lengthy and ceremonious, however, than at the Berlin Schloss.

With him his only hopeful, a thirteen-year-old rough young cub, the darling of his mother, and whom that erudite and accomplished lady is attempting to tame. Frederic William has been let out for the day from the Schloss, where he is kept at his studies and his drills, in honour of the "garden-party." With him he has brought a juvenile relation, the Duke of Courland, and his household of boy-companions, whom they have formed into two military companies, which they each command. Later to-day, with a selection of them, they will act a little French play before the Queen.

Around the King are his half-brothers; the eldest, Charles, a quiet, grave Prince, with difficulty lured from his fine castle of Schwedt on the Oder, beyond Berlin. Of the three others—gay, good-looking young fellows—Philip, Grand Master of Artillery, has covered himself with glory by the fine fireworks and illuminated set-piece, "Jason carrying off the Golden Fleece," with which he made Berlin glitter the night of the royal return from Königsberg.

The courtiers are in attendance. Old Wartensleben, one of the Great Elector's Field-Mmarshals; young Leopold, Prince of the Anhalt-Dessau tiny principality hard by—a fine figure, proud, severe, yet simple; not long married to the Queen's maid of honour, Fräulein von Föhsen. His mother, of Orange-Nassau, had packed him off on a tour in Italy, to forget her. "But time and absence had not had upon him the



PALACE OF CHARLOTTENBURG, BERLIN.  
From a contemporary engraving.





usual effect it has upon lovers ; he came back as much in love as when he started." But, "born a warrior, he longs to be one." Patience "young Dessauer," the elder, war-clouds are lowering : Turin, Kesselsdorf, the "Three Cotillons' War," are in the lap of the gods !

The thick-set young man, with purring manners, evolved from his Paris training, is Chamberlain Count Grumbkow—also husband of a maid of honour—of a chameleon, mole-like character he.

That self-effacing civilian is Private Secretary Ilgen, "solid, brilliant, hard-working as a day-labourer, but reserved, equivocal," with no birth, "no friend but himself"; he began as secretary to Minister Meinders, Baroness von Pöllnitz's second husband. He will go further.

The two cousins von Kamecke are, of course, present. The "grand Kamecke," *ci-devant* page, and now Grand Master of the Wardrobe, quiet and commonplace, is as much in royal favour, as the "petit Kamecke," witty, lively, brilliant, polite, "a courtier *le plus raffiné*," ambitious and cunning to boot. He is deep in a game of chess with His Majesty, an honour now of almost daily occurrence.

Rather askance at him looks Wartenberg, the Prime Minister. For he has a shrewd suspicion that the "petit Kamecke" had a hand in those satirical songs, which Manteuffel, the Saxon courtier, has indited about the Prussian Court, the great Count Wartenberg, *né* Kolbe, not excluded. Little Kamecke keeps his bright eye on the Premier, as the latter will find out later, to his cost. For the Kameckes have the Queen on their side, and the tall one has special opportunities, as Wardrobe Master, for influencing the King.

But to-day Wartenberg seems omnipotent. He began as an obscure Palatinate gentleman, coming to Berlin in the train of the Princess of Simmerin, who asked for him some small post at the Great Elector's Court. Slowly and inconspicuously he has worked himself up. But his wife is his "Achilles' heel."



The recently made Countess, however, neither fair nor attractive, merely immoral, is not at Lützelburg to-day. Only at formal *cercles* has the daughter of the Rhine boatman, the widow of the King's valet, the late mistress, and now the wife of the Prime Minister, the coveted *entrée*. It was difficult enough to secure. Sophia Charlotte proudly held out for long. Her concession was the price she paid to Wartenburg for arranging for her that little trip with her mother, the Electress Sophia, to visit Dutch William at Loo, in order to secure his adhesion to that raising of the Elector of Brandenburg to be King of Prussia on which Frederic had set his heart. But Sophia Charlotte revenges herself, when obliged to address the late Frau von Kolbe, by speaking only the court language, French, of which the Rhine boatman's daughter does not understand one word. The Court laughs up its wide sleeves at her. Yet, such is the Wartenburg influence, male and female, with weak old Frederic, that his late valet's children have been ennobled as Barons of Asbach, and a cabal to crush the Prime Minister has just woefully failed.

To this group of court gentlemen, in their full-bottomed wigs, wide-skirted coats, huge cuffs and ruffles, enters, very nervously, a small boy of nine, with a heavy burden on his mind, a petition in his hand, and a lump in his throat. His dress is a copy in miniature of that of his elders, except that his fair hair is caught back with a bow, and heavily plastered with powder.

An anxious glance round hardly reassures the little lad. On the Prince Royal, his young comrade-in-arms, he knows he cannot, for a surety, count for support; for Frederic William, as he has found to his cost, is a bully at heart. The presence of the great Wartenberg makes him quake inwardly; for is not the Prime Minister author of all his woe?

A delay follows; hard to bear. Then the King triumphantly check-mating—he always does, the “*petit*”

sees to that—looks up from the chessboard. Frederic beckons kindly to the little petitioner.

The boy comes of a race of soldiers ; between his deep bows—"he bows very gracefully," said Louis XIV of him later on—between his obeisances, he plucks up his courage. But if his heart would only stop thumping ! Shall he ever find his voice ?

Then he thinks of his mother, and his spirit comes back to him. His poor mother ! They were so happy together, she and her two fatherless boys, when the rich old step-father died, after six months' marriage, leaving them that fine house in the Molk-Markt. But the King, egged on by the Wartenberg, must needs arrange, at twenty-four hours' notice, a good match for that lady's late lover, gay young Chamberlain von Wense. A court cabal to overthrow the Prime Minister uses Wense as a catspaw. The plot shipwrecks. Wense is lying in Spandau, a state prisoner ; his wife and step-sons' future ruined ; house, furniture—all sequestered by order of the King.

The only hope of liberty, of livelihood, lies in the favourable result of one small boy's tact and persuasion. So he thinks of his poor mother, suffering for no fault of her own. And he finds his voice.

High and quavering rings through the lofty apartment the humble petition, in his mother's name, that His Majesty would be pleased to have the seals taken off her effects, the guards removed from her house, and would graciously appoint a commission to judge her husband, that he may be punished if guilty, and set at liberty if innocent.

Bravely the boy reads through till the end. Then, suddenly, the King and the courtiers, the sunlit garden behind them, all become a misty blurr. The lump in his throat wins the mastery, and he sobs aloud.

Good-natured Majesty is visibly touched. Kindly he looks down on the boy, and speaks :

"I will do what your mother wishes, but only out of consideration for her ; I sympathize with her

troubles ; but her husband has so deserved my wrath that I cannot prevent myself from making him feel it. But," he adds, more kindly still, to the weeping little lad, "I am very pleased to see that you are good-hearted enough to petition in favour of a man who, I know, has not acted well towards your mother and yourself, in spite of the orders I laid upon him when I married him to your mother."

The soldier's son lifts a tear-stained face, and speaks up, brave and loyal.

"I have no cause of complaint, Sire, against my step-father, and, even if I had one," he adds warmly, with another choke, "it would be enough for me to see my mother's grief in order to beg for his liberty."

"Very praiseworthy, these feelings," says the King, rising to end the interview. "Go and tell your mother from me that she shall be satisfied ; and be sure," he adds, laying a fat, kindly hand on the boy's shoulder, as the latter bends to embrace his knees, "that *I* will take care of *you* !"

Prussian Majesty waddles off to take a look in the gardens at the improvements. Comes a message from the Queen, commanding the little lad to her study.

Sophia Charlotte is resting upon a sofa in a room covered, walls and ceiling, with priceless china arranged with her own hands—you may see it intact there to-day. Over her head hang lustres of gold, by her side her coffee-table, cups, and coffee-pot—all of solid gold.

Fair, fat, stately, "proud yet polite," Sophia Charlotte, in manner, as in character, is every inch a Queen, though her errant sister-in-law did dub her in her love-letters "La Boule." No stranger is she to the boy, now himself again ; for does he not often come down with the Prince Royal and his little comrades to Lützelburg, and drill before the Queen, "who likes to see in the Prince, her son, these promises of a warlike spirit" ; and is he not to act that very evening in one of those French plays with the Prince Royal, whom his mother tries in this wise to refine ?

The only other person present with the Queen is her favourite lady-in-waiting, Henrietta Charlotte von Pöllnitz, sitting on the floor at the end of the sofa. The boy's father's cousin, she, at this time of day, whatever the years may bring, is quite a good friend to him.

Both the ladies are eagerly awaiting the report of the momentous interview.

Kindly, the Queen first asks after the mother's health. "I order you," she says, "to assure her of my esteem and my friendship."

Then she asks how the petition fared. The little lad repeats the King's gracious words.

"I am very pleased," replies the Queen, "at the good mind the King seems in towards you. Make the most of it," she adds; "study to deserve his favour. I, on my part, will do all that lies in my power to support you in it, and in me you will always have a real protectress."

Thus did nine-year-old Pöllnitz make his début as a courtier, and receive his first lesson in court-craft.





## PART I

### *THE APPRENTICE*

“ Il y a un pays où les joies sont visibles, mais fausses, les chagrins cachés, mais réels. Les spectacles, le repas, la chasse, les ballets, les carnavals et les autres divertissements, à quoi servent-ils le plus souvent, sinon à cacher les intérêts, les passions, les soins, les craintes, les espérances, et les inquiétudes. Qu’à la vérité, celui qui a vu la Cour, a vu du monde ce qui est le plus beau, et le plus orné.”

LA BRUYÈRE.



## CHAPTER I

TRADITION attributes the granting of the patent of nobility to the Pölnitz family to the great Duke of Saxony and Thuringia, Henry the Fowler, elected King of Germany in 918. Modern genealogical books of German nobility make this tradition a fact. In any case, the family appears from the thirteenth century onwards in the Thuringian land. The ancestral castle was certainly that of Nieder-Pölnitz, now a ruin, near the village of that name, between Gera and Triptis. Ober-Pölnitz, a little to the north-west, is also a fine old castle; but Nieder-Pölnitz seems to have been the chief seat of the family till it was sold in the fifteenth century.

Our hero's first ancestor of distinction was one of six sons, who was chancellor to the Electors of Saxony in the early seventeenth century. In his hands, at the beginning of the Thirty Years War, often lay important decisions affecting the destinies of Germany and Bohemia. An extremely influential man, it was probably owing to him that his youngest brother—who, as Saxon Deputy, was assassinated at the Diet of Regensburg in 1622—came to be the Saxon envoy at Brussels to the Archduke Albert, Governor of the Austrian Netherlands. He married a Dutchwoman, Anne Petronella van Hell, left three sons and a daughter, who married Edwart Morgan, Heer of Landumnij, a colonel in the service of the King of England, who took refuge with his brothers-in-law on the family estates at Aschbach, near Bamberg, during the English Revolution.

Of these three brothers-in-law, Ernst left only a daughter, wife of the celebrated Hans Adam von Ofen,

who, in 1686, did yeoman service against the Turks with his 3,000 Brandenburgers—though the Duke of Lorraine had the glory—and who died a Saxon Field-Marshal.

His brothers, Gerhardt and Christoph, received in 1670 from the Emperor Leopold I, for themselves and their descendants, the patent of *Reichsfrei* and *Pannerherrn*. This patent conferred upon them independence of all authority save that of the Emperor and the Empire. It was bestowed upon princes and great nobles from the twelfth century onwards. *Panner* is a German corruption of the French *bannière*. Originally the General, or Lord of the Land, had the right of unfurling the Banner, in order to summon all vassals to war. But, with the development of the feudal system, the high title of *Bannerherr* was given to the chief vassal. However, when, at the end of the seventeenth century, it was conferred upon the Baron von Pölnitz it was no longer anything but an honorary title of distinction.

According to the patent, the spelling of the name is always Pölnitz, with only one "l." Though various members and branches of the family, with the orthographical licence of the period, seem to have varied it, the younger branch adhered to this spelling; but our hero always signed himself with two "l's." King Louis II of Bavaria, when the question was submitted to him in 1884, expressly recommended that Pölnitz should be considered the correct version.

Gerhardt Bernhard, the youngest brother, our hero's grandfather, took service with the States-General of the Low Countries. He, too, married a Dutchwoman, Helianore, Countess of Nassau, a natural daughter of Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, the great soldier, by Madame de Mechelen; with her two brothers, and some other half-brothers and sisters, Helianore was legitimised, all receiving the titles of counts and countesses.

Now the first wife of Frederic William, the Great Elector of Brandenburg, was Louisa Henrietta of

Orange ; he himself had been educated in Holland, and, when he succeeded to the Electorate, evinced a great predilection for everything Dutch, and liked to have Dutchmen about him. So it came about that, on the strength of his wife's left-handed relationship to the Electress Louisa Henrietta, as well as of his own mother's Dutch origin, Gerhardt Bernhard achieved a most successful career. In 1657 he is described as Chamberlain to His Electoral Highness of Brandenburg, and Colonel of the Mounted Life Guards. From 1657 he was in command of the Foot Guards, a colonel ranking above the general-sergeant-majors, and subsequently became Governor of Berlin, War Minister, and Master of the Horse to the Great Elector.

In addition to considerable military service—for his expedition to Fehrbellin with Frederic William see the Hohenzollern Chronicle—the Great Elector entrusted him with important diplomatic missions, and on June 26th, 1660, Gerhardt Bernard was sent by him to England to congratulate Charles II on his Restoration.

As Governor of Berlin Gerhardt Bernhard befriended the fugitive French Huguenots when they settled in that city, and their first meeting-place for divine service was in his antechamber.

His Dutch marriage, however, was not a happy one, "very ill-assorted," writes his grandson.

"My grandmother was proud, stingy, and jealous ; her husband was fond of spending money, and also of the fair sex. Such opposite characters caused between them a misunderstanding not far removed from hatred. My grandfather, however, shortly before his death, did not hesitate to ensure to her the enjoyment of all his wealth. He repented him of the sorrow he had caused her, and imagined that this generosity would sufficiently repair it ; but it only served to add to her impatience to become a widow. She had not even the kindness to conceal it from him, and the last words he heard were neither consolatory nor Christian."



Gerhardt Bernhard left four children. His second son died early, a Captain in the Foot Guards, leaving a daughter, Henrietta Charlotte, who became the celebrated maid of honour to the Electress Sophia of Hanover and her daughter, the Queen of Prussia. Disagreeable and sharp-tongued, Henrietta Charlotte was well hated by her young cousins, and by the Queen's daughter Wilhelmina, against whose marriage with the Prince of Wales she worked with all her power. A "poisonous dragon," the English envoy called her.

Of Gerhardt's daughters, the younger, Henrietta Eleonora, married, first, von Schulemburg, Chamberlain to the Elector of Brandenburg and Grand Marshal and Equerry to the Margrave of Baireuth, and, secondly, the Marquis François Duhamel, major-general of cavalry to the Elector of Brandenburg. Mortified in his ambitions, the Order of the Black Eagle failed to soothe him. He left the Prussian service and entered that of the Venetian Republic as Commander-in-Chief of their army.

Gerhardt's eldest son, William Louis, was brought up with the Electoral Prince—not Frederic, who became the first King of Prussia, but Charles Emil, who was supposed to have been poisoned by his stepmother, the Great Elector's second wife. William Louis married Louisa Katharine, Baroness von Eulenburg, of the now well-known "princely house."

By the merest chance their son, our hero, missed being born an Englishman, and probably chronicling the earlier Georges instead of the Hohenzollerns, for his father took service under William of Orange, afterwards King of England. But, aggrieved at being passed over for promotion, William Louis returned to Berlin. When William of Orange became King of England he remembered von Pöllnitz.

"The first time," writes his son, "that William the Third came to inspect the army after ascending the throne, he found my father at the head of a cavalry

regiment, and invited him to come over to England with him, offering him letters of naturalization, and promising to raise his rank. But my father, speaking to him with a frankness which it does not befit me to blame, replied : ‘ Your Majesty broke his word to me once, when he was Prince of Orange ; what might he not do now that he is King ? ’ ”

William Louis died in winter-quarters at Maestricht in 1694, leaving two little sons—the younger, Charles Louis, but two years of age—to the guardianship of their uncle by marriage, the Marquis Duhamel.

Charles Louis was born on February 25th, 1692, at Issuin, a village near Cologne, where his father was quartered ; his godmother was Sophia Charlotte of Hanover, Electoral Princess of Brandenburg. At his father’s death his mother found herself in very straitened circumstances. The Dutch grandmother, as we have seen, had become possessed of all the family property, and, exhibiting her national characteristic of miserliness, gave no share of it to her widowed daughter-in-law. But for the Elector’s assistance the latter’s position would have been very sad ; but he recalled her to Berlin and gave her a pension. Further, he quickly arranged a second marriage for her with rich old Franz von Meinders, his Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. Ten months later she was a widow again. Now one of the richest women at Court, she relinquished the pension she felt she no longer needed, and took up her abode in a large house in the Molk-Markt. Always devoted to her sons, especially to the younger, she kept him close to her, and Charles Louis was brought up in the atmosphere of the most brilliant Court in Germany.

Berlin was fast becoming a fine city. Frederic I and his wife were both great builders, and were busy over palaces and bridges, and in erecting statues. The grim, mediæval castle of his ancestors on an island in the Spree Frederic was adorning and enlarging into a magnificent palace with archways, porticoes, long galleries

and sculpture, a step-less grand staircase up which a coach could drive, and the amber-panelled study set with mirrors. Pesne, the French artist, was painting with the scenes of Frederic's victories the ceilings of the vast and lofty halls, "where," writes Charles Louis, "I never saw in any palace in the world such a prodigious quantity of silver tables, console-tables, candelabra, screens, frames of mirrors, arm-chairs, everything of the precious metal." Frederic left £700,000 weight of silver. In the Hall of the Knights was a buffet, extending the entire length of one side, covered with huge silver-gilt basins and bowls. Pöllnitz lived to see it all melted down during the Seven Years War!

The little old stables had been altered into barracks for the guards and over them Frederic had located his picture-gallery and the Academy of Arts and Sciences, founded by his erudite wife. There was the observatory behind it, with the newest inventions, and Frederic had his collection of antiquities, his chemical laboratory, his royal library full of treasures.

The Friedrichstadt was the new and fashionable suburb, across the river, close to the long avenue of the Linden, planted by Frederic's mother, "the most pleasant quarter of the town," mentions Pöllnitz.

Outside Berlin Frederic had built the palace called Oranienburg, in memory of his mother, in the midst of meadows and Dutch canals, "with the finest garden in Germany," says Pöllnitz; "the china vases in the palace unequalled in Europe." Both Frederic and his wife were great china-maniacs; the discovery of China had made a craze for collecting all over Europe. To the Great Elector's castle at Potsdam this "most expensive King" was now adding. For his wife he was building, beyond the wood into which the Linden Avenue led, the "lordly pleasure-house" of Charlottenburg, where to this day may be seen her golden table and coffee-set, and the walls of the rooms decorated with china by her own hands.

Sophia Charlotte was daughter of the Great Electress,

Sophia of Hanover, and sister of our George I. That lady, the friend of Leibnitz and of Bayle, clever and ambitious, a dabbler in philosophy, had brought up her daughter creedless, that she might make the best marriage possible, either Roman Catholic or Protestant. To the Prussian Court under its rather silly, vain, and pleasure-loving middle-aged monarch, Sophia Charlotte imparted an atmosphere of intellectuality and art. Her sister-in-law, the unfortunate wife of George I, had nicknamed her in her secret letters to her lover, Königs-mark, "la Boule," for she was short, and too plump. But an enthusiastic Irishman, secretary to the British Minister, describes her as "the most beautiful princess of her time . . . her reading infinite . . . her wit inimitable . . . hers the art of combining merit with learning."

While her vain old husband was spending his money on palaces and in fêtes in imitation of Louis XIV, Sophia Charlotte was engaged in the difficult task of training her only surviving child, Frederic William, a rough young cub, as unlike herself as possible.

Frederic was always under the thumb of favourites, male and female. At the time young Pöllnitz came to Berlin Kolbe stood highest in the King's favour. His wife, the daughter of a Rhine boatman, had been the King's mistress when he was Electoral Prince. But she and Kolbe had now, by royal patronage, blossomed into Count and Countess von Wartenberg, and the lady's head was so turned that she was the laughing-stock of the whole Court, up their sleeves.

The machinations of Countess von Wartenberg to be admitted to the Queen's receptions, the intrigues of Frederic himself with the Emperor, the King of England, and the Princes of the Empire, to have the Electorate of Brandenburg raised to a Kingdom, and the reflex of the struggle for the crown of Poland which agitated the European Courts—in this gusty atmosphere Charles Louis found himself as a boy. More immediately important to himself was his mother's third marriage. This was arranged by the Elector and Electress them-



selves. The husband selected was one of their chamberlains, a young Christian Louis von der Wense. "Neither love nor interest had any part in this marriage," writes Charles Louis. Von Wense, though of a good family in Zell, had only inherited a small property, which he had to share with many brothers.

"My mother had never spoken to him before she married him, and had only seen him when he was performing his duties as first *maître d'hôtel*. The Elector himself arranged the marriage at the instance of the Countess von Wartenberg. She had been much in love with Von Wense (perhaps she loved him still) and, in making him marry a rich wife, she may have wished to reward him for the attentions he had paid her. It was not necessary to use much persuasion with the Elector to induce him to mix himself up with match-making; his fancy was always to arrange marriages, good or bad; if only he saw people married it was all the same to him."

He himself, and Frau von Wartenberg, suggested it to Frau von Meinders, who at first protested. He came to her and told her that for her sons' sake she ought to marry a third time, and promised that they should gain rather than lose by it, and gave her twenty-four hours to consider the matter. The Elector then left her, forbidding her to escort him out, and went straight to her mother-in-law, the redoubtable Eleanora, to whom he gave such a glowing account of the prospective son-in-law that he won her over.

"Till the next day my mother remained very irresolute, and then the Elector came back again, as he had promised. As it is with difficulty that one resists a sovereign's orders, my mother, though always opposed to a new alliance, seemed yet to consent to the marriage, which took place a few days later," at Königsberg, where the Court then was. The Elector honoured it by



his presence, but all the relations were so angry with the bride that, when she returned to Berlin, none of them came to see her. The Baroness Eleanora von Pöllnitz, who had reconsidered her opinion, "made the greatest noise."

"Her great age, and the honour she had had of serving the late Electress, mother of the Elector, gave her liberty to tell the Prince what she thought about it. She grew so angry with him, even to childishness, telling she was broken-hearted at not being strong enough to strangle him, because he had given von Wense as a husband to her daughter-in-law. To appease her, the Elector said he would do so much for Frau von Wense that this marriage, far from doing us the least harm, would be very advantageous to us. Indeed, as he left her, he appointed von Wense *Maréchal de Cour*."

By the end of the century the Elector Frederic had obtained his darling wish. The Emperor at last had bestowed the coveted dignity, and the Elector set off to be crowned at Königsberg, the old Prussian capital. Von Wense, by virtue of his new appointment, accompanied Frederic, but his wife, owing to her approaching confinement, was obliged to stay behind. Her little eight-year-old son, Charles Louis, however, she sent with her husband, as a sort of page. The memory of this impressive journey lingered in his mind. It cost the new King immense sums. To the firing of cannon and the pealing of the bells of all the churches in Berlin, the long procession, preceded by gorgeous heralds, filed out under the castle-archway on the long mid-winter journey across the Posen wastes—a procession so long that 30,000 post-horses were required in addition to those of the royal stables.

Pöllnitz describes at length the various details of the elaborate ceremony of the coronation, which was performed by three Lutheran and three Calvinist ministers.

“ Though there is no altar in the Reformed Church, the King had one, and even presented a magnificent crucifix for it, in order to show how much he wished to honour the two Protestant Churches.”

All passed off just as the King, much of a stickler for ceremonial, would have it.

“ It was only the Queen who drew down upon herself a little reprimand over a pinch of snuff. She had long been watching for a moment when she could not be seen by the King, whose throne was opposite hers, and, thinking it had come, furtively drew out her snuff-box. At this moment the King happened to glance at her ; she endeavoured to hide it ; but the King’s look showed her well enough that he had noticed it, and, indeed, the Prince, who was not amenable in such a matter, instantly ordered one of his gentlemen who was behind him to go and ask the Queen, from him, ‘ if she remembered the place she was in, and the position she held there ? ’ ”

The Court kept carnival at Königsberg—the ancient city in a whirl of festivities, and the envoy of the King of Poland coming to present his master’s compliments, though the Republic of Poland never recognized the monarchy of Prussia. Then, on March 8th, the great train turned homewards again, obliged to go round by Danzig, because of the sudden thaw on the Vistula, and received there with great fêtes. Only early in May did Berlin, gay with flowers and triumphal arches, receive its first King, and then abandon itself to merry-makings till the Court broke up, and the King went to Oranienburg and the Queen to her favourite Lützelburg.

Only Frederic William, Crown Prince as he now was, was left in Berlin, to go on with his military drill.

“ Care had been taken,” writes Pöllnitz, “ to arrange a Court for him of some size, all composed of young

people of his own age. The young Prince had formed two companies out of all these youths ; he commanded the first himself, and the Duke of Courland the other. I was in this second company, and we sometimes went and drilled at Lützelburg before the Queen, who liked to see these sparks of a military spirit in her son. We also acted some plays before her. It was thus that this Princess endeavoured to imbue the Prince, her son, with taste and delicacy even in amusements."

Thus early did Charles Louis become the comrade of Frederic William, only four years his senior, and to whom, in spite of some passing difficulties and estrangements, he was to remain steadfastly attached for life. Doubtless he had to put up with the young Prince's ungovernable outbursts of tyrannical temper, from which even the latter's own children had to suffer in later years. Frederic William was a naughty boy, and doubtless bullied Charles Louis and his elder brother, Frederic Maurice, as much as he did his cousin the Electoral Prince of Hanover (George II of England) when he went on a visit to his grandmother. We also hear of him rolling the little Duke of Courland on the ground by the hair, and throwing a chamberlain downstairs, all without so much as a reprimand from his fond mother. Sadly, however, did she write to Fräulein von Pöllnitz, our hero's cousin and her favourite lady :

" I have much trouble, my dear Pöllnitz, and I must comfort myself by telling you about it . . . the young man whom I only thought lively and impetuous has given proofs of a callousness which certainly arises from a bad heart. 'No,' says von Bülow [another of her ladies] 'it is only avarice.' *Dieu ! tant pis !* avaricious at such a tender age ! One can correct oneself of other vices, but that one goes on increasing ; and then how serious it is, because of the consequences that ensue from it ! Can compassion and pity find access to a heart dominated by interest ? "

At ten years old Frederic William began to keep, with minute exactness, an account-book of his daily expenditure. It is a pity that, in this respect, Charles Louis did not follow the example set him by his comrade, and acquire habits of economy which would have saved him much trouble and harass all his life long !

Shortly after Wartenberg's elevation to the post of Chief Minister a cabal was formed against him, led by Count Lottum. Count Wense, as he now was, was chosen by the plotters to fire the fuse, otherwise to undermine the King's real attachment to Wartenberg. Though bound by all ties of gratitude to the Minister, and especially to his wife, who had arranged such a good marriage for him, von der Wense was flattered at being selected for such a delicate task, demanding not only much courage, but also, as it transpired, more tact and more favour with the King than he possessed.

One day, when the King was speaking sharply of Wartenberg, who was not exempt from the effects of his master's irritability, Wense thought the occasion propitious, and proceeded to enlighten the King upon the Minister's abuse of the monarch's name, his rapacity and injustice, and his wife's extravagances, Wartenberg's table expenses being larger than the King's. The latter listened attentively, and Wense fancied that he had made an impression.

However, Frederic repeated these calumnies to his favourite, and the Minister conceived a deadly resentment against Wense. One day, being alone with the King in his coach when they were driving to the hunting-box at Goltz, he took the opportunity of stirring up Frederic against Wense ; so much so that, when they arrived at Goltz, every one saw what a hot temper the King was in.

" Contrary to his custom," relates Pöllnitz, " he spoke to no one, and he ordered my step-father to have dinner served. When he sat down to table he had hardly touched his bread ere he declared that it was bad. He



complained to von Wense, who had charge of all that concerned the Royal Commissariat. Wense replied to the King that it was true that the bread was not as good as usual, because the baking-cart had broken down upon the road, and that the baker, who was a little late, had not had time to bake. The King, not satisfied with his reply, said he was tired of being badly served and that he maintained that every one must do their duty. At the same time he threw down his napkin. Von Wense, having fetched another, presented it to the King, who would not receive it; he ordered him immediately to quit his presence. Two hours later Wense was arrested by a police-officer of the Bodyguard, who took him in his coach, escorted by guards, to Cüstrin."

Here he was treated as a state prisoner, and the Aulic-councillor was ordered by the Minister to seal up his effects in his wife's house.

"She was in the country, my brother was at church with his tutor, so that I was alone in the house when the police came to execute their orders. They showed them to me, and asked me to point out my step-father's room that they might set seals everywhere. I hastened to show them, and they left a document with me when they went away, which was an order to my mother not to appear at Court, nor to ask for my father's liberty. I set out at once and fetched my tutor, who took this unpleasant news to my mother. Her grief was as great as her surprise; she had a real affection for her husband, and she was unaware of his schemes against the Minister, to whom she thought him still devoted. As the order tied her hands and prevented her appearing at Court herself, I was made to go and beg for my step-father's liberty."

It was an onerous and delicate task for a boy of nine! We have described the interview, in which, to judge by the impression he made upon the King and the



Queen, he must have acquitted himself with a grace and tact beyond his age, and given promise of a capacity for courtiership which later years did not belie.

In high hopes Charles Louis returned to the Molk-Markt and his anxious mother. But, alas! they were not speedily realized. It took infinite toil and trouble, interest and influence, ere she could obtain her husband's freedom, and that only after he had undergone no less than seven months' imprisonment, and been sentenced to a fine of £2,000. No such severe punishment was meted out to the other conspirators, who had made Wense their catspaw.

Witgenstein, a creature of Wartenberg's, was appointed Grand Marshal of the palace in Wense's place. The latter's disgrace involved much sorrow and suffering to his family. His wife followed him to his estate near Zell, and her sons, removed both from the Crown Prince's *entourage* and from Berlin, were sent with a tutor to Lüneburg to finish their education.

Their outlook on life was indeed not promising! But worse followed. Wense had been granted three months' grace to pay his fine. His wife's property was made security. But it proved insufficient, and, as the fine remained unpaid, Frau von Wense's fine house in the Molk-Markt, with its magnificent furniture, was seized and sold and the house turned into a gold and silver lace factory.



CHARLES XII OF SWEDEN.  
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.



## CHAPTER II

IF Frederic the First was weak and easily led, he was kind-hearted. Not for long did he forget the sons and grandsons of the two soldiers who had served his house so well, and who were related to him. Presently he recalled the two Pöllnitz boys from Lüneburg, "lest their mother, who was a Lutheran, should bring them up as such." The Prussian royal family were staunch Calvinist, or Reformed, and it was left to Frederic's successor to smooth the animosities between the rival sects. In the case of Charles Louis, however, as will be seen, the King's care was not destined to bear lasting fruit.

Frederic had just founded in the Königliche Strasse his Académie des Nobles, a well-meant institution, "to bring up young nobles of the Court in a manner suitable to their birth." The King gave the nominations; the fees were seventy-five pounds a year, which included board, lodging, and instruction. He paid the surplus expenses, and the best masters had been collected. In this Academy he placed Frederic Maurice and Charles Louis von Pöllnitz.

The lads were present at the unveiling of the statue of the Great Elector the King had erected on Kurfürsten Brücke. They must also have seen "Milord Marlborough" when he came on a visit to Berlin, fresh from the victory of Blenheim, and thus have become infused with military ardour, which soon demanded a sphere of action.

Directly Marlborough left, the Queen went to Hanover to see her mother. On the journey she caught cold; but, recovering on arrival, attended a ball. This caused

such a serious relapse that all hope was soon abandoned. From his cousin, her favourite lady-in-waiting, who was present with her to the end, Pöllnitz gleaned details of the peaceful last hours of her who had been brought up creedless.

“The Queen, though in the flower of her age, saw death approach without fear. She wrote to the King a letter full of affection, in which she thanked him for the kindness he had always shown her, and recommended her servants to his care. She herself comforted Ernst Augustus, her brother, who was in real despair at the state she was in. ‘There is nothing so natural as death,’ she said to him. ‘It is inevitable; though, at my age, I might have hoped to live a few years longer, yet I have no regret at dying.’

“M. de la Bergerie, the Minister of the French Church, who helped her at her last moments, was so surprised at the strength of mind and calmness which she showed that he listened to her rather than exhorted her. ‘I have made a serious study of my religion for the last twenty years; I have read attentively books about it, in order to be in doubt of what I ought to think about it. You cannot tell me anything that I have not read, and what you tell me will certainly not add anything to my feelings.’ Then, turning to my cousin, who was on the other side of the bed, ‘Alas!’ she said, ‘what useless ceremonies they are going to perform over this body!’ Seeing Fräulein von Pöllnitz burst into tears, she asked, ‘Why do you weep? Do you think I am immortal?’ At the same time she held out her hand to Duke Ernst, her brother, saying, ‘My dear brother, I am suffocating!’ and she died at once.”

By this news the King “was so shocked that he fell several times into a fainting fit,” says Pöllnitz, adding sadly and gratefully, “I myself, and also all my family, lost a firm and real protectrice.”

“The idea of rendering to the Queen all the honours due to her rank stayed for a while the King’s grief,” he



adds. Frederic ever loved pomp and ceremony. He gave Sophia Charlotte a magnificent funeral, which, begun by the Elector at Hanover, was carried on through Zell to the frontiers of Brandenburg, and into Berlin. The lads from the Académie des Nobles of course attended, and Pöllnitz was impressed by all the royalties in their long black cloaks, while the Parliament of Orange, sheltering at Berlin from Louis XIV's orders for compulsory conversion, appeared, by the King's desire, in their red robes.

Shortly after this the Pöllnitz boys took the principal parts in another funeral ceremony, that of a member of their own family, in which they acted as chief mourners. Their guardian, the Marquis Duhamel, had died in the Morea, fighting the Turks, as generalissimo of the Venetian army. His wife, their father's sister, who was with him, returned to Venice, intending to go back to Berlin. But, upon disembarking, she was put into quarantine, and died in the lazaretto. As she had expressed a wish to be buried in her native city, her two nephews, only now fourteen and thirteen, and one of her nieces, who were her heirs—for she died childless—undertook the long journey through Southern Germany and Austria to carry out their aunt's last wishes. Thus it came about that Charles Louis first imbibed a taste for travelling, and that his glimpse of Venice, then the gayest city in Europe, whetted his appetite for pleasure resorts. They buried their aunt Henrietta under the new Reformed Church, "in the catacombs, recently built," says Pöllnitz, "to bury any who desired it."

The Queen's death hardly affected the pleasures at Court. Prussia was now at peace, but the war of the Spanish Succession raged in Southern Europe and the Low Countries, and that of the Polish Succession devastated Poland and Saxony, and Charles of Sweden was "carrying fire and sword wherever he went." The Prussian troops hired out to fight in North Italy and Flanders earned the praise of Prince Eugene, and one can well imagine that the youths at the Academy of

Nobles burned with military ardour, and fretted against the court pageants of which they had more than enough.

Doubtless Charles Louis, with the rest, worshipped from afar the soldier heroes of the day—Marlborough, whom they had seen at the Berlin Court, young Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, *beau sabreur*, winning his laurels under Prince Eugene. But what of that other *preux chevalier*, Charles of Sweden, the invincible victor over the Muscovites, now planting his heel on Saxony? In his camp at Altranstadt Charles received the ambassadors of nearly all the Powers of Christendom. Some, including Marlborough, came to beg him to quit the dominions of the Empire; others, to attack the Emperor himself.

Early in 1706 Frederic despatched a special envoy, his Minister von Printzen. Imagine Charles Louis's delight at being selected to accompany him as page. Charles had already sent to Berlin to ask the King to recognize Stanislaus Leczinsky as King of Poland. Frederic had been magnificently hospitable, but evasive. Charles was equally evasive, but his reception of the Prussians "quite simple and altogether military. One might have applied to him the verses which Crébillon in *Rhadamistus* puts into Parasmane's mouth:

"‘La nature marâtre de ces affreux climats,  
Ne produit, au lieu d’or, que du fer, des soldats.’”

Even at that age Pöllnitz had a natural eye for dress. He noted that the King and the Swedes alike—

“Wore great plain hats with a brass button; the tight jacket, dark blue waistcoat, and breeches, chamois colour, or elk-skin. They mostly wore gloves of elk-skin, or some other thick skin, which covered the sleeves, which were small as the Swedes still wear them.”

A great contrast to the gay Prussians in full-skirted, gold-braided coats and full bottomed wigs.

“The King was always booted and spurred, with the tails of his coat buttoned up, as if ready to mount his

horse. He was well-built, above ordinary height, supple below ; he had broad shoulders, and altogether was a fine man. He held himself very upright, and had an imposing air ; when he walked he dragged one leg a little, since, in consequence of a fall from his horse at Cracow, he broke his thigh. No one sat a horse better than he did. He covered eight to ten German miles a day simply for a ride."

The hero gave audience in a barn which made a large hall, the walls and ceiling of which were covered with carpets. Charles was at the end of the hall, leaning against a table. His hat was on his head ; he uncovered at the first bow the ambassador made him. Then, the King and the ambassador having covered themselves, the latter spoke, but only said the usual compliments. Charles answered in a few words. After the audience the ambassador asked permission to present his suite.

" ' If they wish to see the King of Sweden,' he replied, ' let them come to Stockholm ; here they will only see a soldier.' He looked at us, gave us a gracious nod, to which we replied by a low bow. The ambassador dined with the King ; as for his suite, we were asked to dine with Count Piper, who treated us very civilly. The ambassador came to us just as we had got to the soup. The King had only been half an hour at table."

" Charles XII treated M. von Printzen with kindness and confidence when at his camp ; as for us, we congratulated ourselves much on the civilities and kind welcome the Swedes gave us."

But Printzen was no luckier in his negotiations for Augustus than Charles's envoy had been at Berlin for Stanislaus.

To Blenheim succeeded Ramillies, Marlborough writing to congratulate Frederic on the fine share the Prussian troops had had in that victory. After Ramillies, the defence of Turin, which gave occasion

for the "distinguished valour" of the Prince of Anhalt; "the Prussians show great bravery, and suffer much, especially the Grenadiers, worthy of praise and the admiration of everybody," writes the Duke of Savoy. Patriotic feelings and a thirst for glory mounted high at the Académie des Nobles. But there were more court junkettings for Pöllnitz to go through ere he received his baptism of fire.

The pleasing news of Ramillies reached the King at Hanover, where he was arranging the marriage, planned by his wife before her death, of the Prince Royal with his first cousin, Sophia Dorothea, daughter of the Elector, afterwards George II, and of the unfortunate Dorothea, who, interned long years ago in her lonely castle of Ahlden, was to have no part nor lot in her daughter's magnificent wedding.

Pöllnitz, with his eye for millinery, relates that the bride had—

"A trousseau the like of which had never a princess of Germany before. The purchases had been made in Paris, Madame, the Duchess of Orleans, the bride's aunt, having chosen and ordered them. She showed them all to Louis XIV, who, on seeing them, remarked that it was to be wished, for the Paris shopkeepers, that all the princesses of Germany were fitted out in that same way."

Sophia Dorothea had a magnificent reception at Berlin. She was "of much beauty and with an agreeable conversation . . . her figure the most beautiful in the world," chronicles the British Minister. The marriage at the Schloss chapel was followed by a supper, and a ball opened by the bridal pair in the torchlight polonaise round the great hall, marched to the strains of kettledrums and trumpets. For six weeks the "expensive old king" surpassed himself with his fêtes. His brothers—



“The Margraves Albert and Christian Louis danced a ballet, ‘Beauty triumphing over Hero,’ with all the youth of the Court. I took part in it,” writes Pöllnitz, “and I recollect that the first-mentioned Prince, who was arranging it, and who took gay things very seriously, had alternations of anger and reconciliation with the ballet-master during the preparations for the entertainment, which were for us a kind of play more amusing than the entertainment itself.”

It was an age of extraordinary credulity, and Pöllnitz tells a story of the Court about this time which exemplifies it. In the intervals of diplomacy Lord Raby, the British Minister (renewing, chiefly by means of the Countess Wartenberg, whose friend of the moment he was, the alliance between Prussia and England) was duped by an adventurer, calling himself Count Cajetan of Naples. He introduced him to Counts Witgenstein and Wartenberg, who were both seeking the philosophers’ stone. These told the King about him, and assured Frederic that this adept would coin millions for him. “Expensive Frederic” wished to see this prodigy; he spoke to him, and, as Cajetan “had the gift of the gab, the King was easily persuaded that in a short time he would surpass the Mogul in riches.” Presents flowed in upon Cajetan, and, at the end of a few months, he was pressed to give a proof of his art.

“This took place in a room in the Schloss, in the presence of the King, the Prince Royal, the Grand Marshal, the Grand Chamberlain, and two or three others. The Prince Royal, naturally suspicious, had undertaken to supply all the utensils necessary for the great work. The crucible was on the stove, the Prince Royal put into it the metal which was to be changed into gold. Cajetan having given him a phial containing a reddish liquid, he poured a few drops into the crucible; then, with a brass stick, he stirred the substance which was in the crucible, and after half an hour ordered it to



be taken off the fire. They let it get cold, after which the goldsmith and officers of the mint were called in, who discovered that the transmutation was real, and that there was over a pound's weight of fine gold. From this moment the expert was looked upon as a messenger from Heaven; he was put up at the *Maison des Princes*, or at the *Hôtel des Ambassadeurs* . . . all his expenses were paid, and he was created a major-general of artillery. (!) But his good luck did not last long; he asked for an advance of fifty thousand crowns to buy, so he said, the original substance which was to produce immense sums. This gave rise to suspicions, and he was watched. Meantime news came that he had already taken in the Electors of Bavaria and the Palatinate. He got word of this and disappeared, carrying off his presents. Taking refuge at Frankfurt, he was claimed by the King and clapped in Cüstrin, where he was hung in a Roman toga of gilt paper, bearing an inscription setting forth his crimes. He died, maintaining to the end that he possessed the art of making gold. His followers regarded him as a martyr. I know some who still stood up for him a long time after his execution, but the King was so ashamed that he forbade any mention of Cajetan's name in his presence."

### CHAPTER III

FREDERIC MAURICE VON PÖLLNITZ, when he left the Académie des Nobles began his military career as cornet in the élite company of the Royal Gendarmes, the most aristocratic of the Prussian cavalry regiments, in which every private was of noble birth and ranked as an officer, and which was only abolished later when the Garde du Corps was formed. The Royal Gendarmes left for the front in the spring, when the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene reopened the campaign in Flanders, where the Duke of Burgundy had seized Ghent and Bruges and the forts near Ostend.

Charles von Pöllnitz was now employed about the Court. But the King, who had had a serious illness in the winter, went off to the waters of Carlsbad ; so Charles, who could not endure to be left behind, asked and received permission to accompany the Gendarmes as a volunteer. The regiment joined the main army at Louvain, and was placed under Count Lottum, to whom Charles was attached.

“I was with him all the campaign and enjoyed it very much. Prince George of Hesse also came to the army as a volunteer, under Marlborough, and distinguished himself greatly.”

Prince Eugene now joined Marlborough, and the two generals planned to dislodge the French from the positions they occupied, and by which they threatened the navigation of the Scheldt, and were masters of the rich tract of country of Vaes. Pöllnitz modestly describes the action which followed :

“The army of the Allies crossed the Dendre at Lessines and the Scheldt at Oudenarde; and, above that town, the French crossed the Scheldt and came and camped in sight of Oudenarde, so that the two armies were face to face. Gradually they came into touch and the battle was joined, the French brigades forming up and charging incessantly. The Allies had to fight without artillery; they had only four pieces, which had to suffice them, the rest of the guns and the baggage not having arrived. On either side the action became very hot; with the greatest obstinacy they fought for several hours, and always with so much loss on the enemy's side that the infantry was put to rout. A great number of squadrons of the Maison du Roi of France, who had advanced to support their infantry, were cut to pieces, and the disorder became so great, and the firing went on in so many places at once, that it was impossible to distinguish between the Allies and the enemy. Then the order was given to cease fire till the morning, and rather to let the enemy escape than to risk putting our army into confusion. The action, which had begun about four in the afternoon, having lasted till the summer dusk, the French retired, part towards Ghent and Denise, with baggage and artillery, and part towards Courtray.

“That evening, being at a little distance from the Prussian Guards with a few Guards officers, I saw a horseman coming towards us at full gallop.

“‘Messieurs, M. le Duc de Vendôme orders you to retire to Ghent.’

“I cannot express his surprise when, for all answer, we told him that he was a prisoner.

“‘Kill me!’ he at once exclaimed. ‘I will not survive what has befallen me!’

“We comforted him as well as we could, and took him to the Count de Lottum, whom he told that he was M. Duplanté, aide-de-camp to M. le Duc de Vendôme. What had deceived him was the Prussian uniform, which differs very little from that of the French.

“It is said that M. de Vendôme's opinion was for

passing the night on the field in order to begin the fight again next day ; but that M. le Duc de Bourgogne and the generals were in favour of an opposite course. And they were right, for, having lost nearly twelve thousand killed, wounded, and prisoners, they would have found themselves in a worse plight than the evening before.

“ The Prussians helped to gain this victory ; but it cost them dear. Von Natzmer, Lieutenant-General and Field-Marshal, was wounded in the head. Baron von Caustein, Colonel of the Gendarmes, was killed ; his regiment charged the Maison du Roi, and was very badly cut about. He lost two-thirds of his men. Ziethen, cornet of this corps, received severe wounds in defending the standard, which he lost at last ; but the Gendarmes took one from the Maison du Roi, which, during the rest of the campaign, they used instead of the one which had been taken from them.

“ There were in the two opposing armies two rivals for the throne of England, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, and the Electoral Prince of Hanover ; the one supported by France as the King of England, and the other by the English nation as the lawful successor of their reigning Queen. The Pretender fought at the head of an Irish squadron, and the Electoral Prince commanded the English cavalry. Each was praised by their party.

“ The day of Oudenarde was all the more glorious for the Allies because the victory was won over the Duc de Bourgogne, who commanded the French army. He had with him the Duc de Berri, his brother, and the Chevalier de Saint-Georges. These Princes were present against the advice of the Duc de Vendôme, who was not listened to ; the cabals which influenced the Duc de Bourgogne’s mind prevented the plans of this famous general [Vendôme] from being followed, and caused the loss of the battle.”

It was a terrible baptism of fire for the lad of sixteen, this duel between his own regiment, which so greatly



distinguished itself, and its counterpart in the French army, the *Maison du Roi*. But no doubt his strictures are the result of conversations some years later, when, in the idleness of the galleries of Versailles, the Princes of the Blood fought their battles o'er again; or, perhaps, of hob-nobbings at Sans Souci with grand old Ziethen, who, the halo of the Seven Years War round his hoary head, would recall to his old friend Pölnitz how he won his spurs at Oudenarde.

“Two days later, at ten at night, Lottum was detached from the main army with forty squadrons and thirty battalions. Without meeting with any resistance he took, and at once razed, the lines the French had thrown between Comines and Varneton, and spread requisitioning parties over Flanders and Artois. He then rejoined the main body, and on the 19th a thanksgiving service was held for the victory which had been won; cannon were fired, and there was a triple salvo of all the musketry.”

A council of war decided that Prince Eugene should now carry the war into the enemy's country and besiege Lille. Charles's war experience was to be very complete.

“On the 26th milord Marlborough, who was only awaiting the arrival of a convoy of heavy artillery to begin the siege of Lille, sent a detachment to Brussels, where there were a great many guns. . . . This march was covered by twenty thousand men of Prince Eugene's army, commanded in person. Safely the great convoy reached Lille, which was invested on August 13th. As this siege was the greatest which had taken place for a long time, and as a very stout resistance was expected from Maréchal de Boufflers, who commanded the fortress, volunteers flocked from all sides to assist at it. Two great Princes, both great commanders, thought it worth while to be present; these were the King of



Poland and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, who had lost two sons in the war, and still had four with the army. They were present at the opening of the trenches on the night of the 22nd-23rd of August.

“The army of observation with which I was on this campaign as a volunteer with Count Lottum, was over seventy thousand men. It was encamped a league from the bridge of Espièrès, and covered the besiegers, to whom it could always give assistance; also it could receive convoys which came from Brussels, Ath, Oudenarde, etc. The headquarters of Prince Eugene were at the Abbey of Loas, also a league from Lille. I am careful not to write particulars of this siege; I know only too well that to treat of war you must be in the trade, and I do not wish to put a weapon into the hands of any who may wish to wield it against me.

“Directly the artillery had arrived—two hundred batteries, sixty-two mortar-guns, of which twenty were howitzers—a park was marked out between the Deuthe and the Marque on which all this artillery was placed until the lines of circumvallation were made, and the fascines and gabions had been got ready for the trenches.

“During the interval a very extraordinary accident happened. The Prince of Nassau-Orange, Stadtholder of Frisia, was having his cravat tied by his valet when a cannon-ball fired from the outermost works of the fortress carried off the servant’s head. The Prince, covered with blood which had spouted out over him, retired into another room and changed both his clothes and his quarters.

“On the night of the 22nd-23rd August the trenches were opened; two assaults were led by the engineers Desroaques and May, French refugees in the service of the States, and who both, according to the opinion of the generals of the army, were much inferior to the Coehorns and the Vaubans. While these former gentlemen pushed on the siege rather slowly, we heard that the Duc de Berri, coming up with his army on the

Moselle, had joined that of the Duc de Bourgogne. This news caused Prince Eugene to come and confer with the Duke of Marlborough. These two generals decided that the army of observation should close upon Lille, encamping behind the Marque, where it would be protected by a marsh. The French also advanced, wishing to gain the plain at the source of the Marque. This movement of the enemy decided the allied generals to go across this plain under good escort to examine the ground at Phalempin, an abbey lying at the head of a brook which runs into the high Deule. They reconnoitred the ground they wished to occupy, and the army took up a position there, reinforced by twenty-six battalions and seventy-six squadrons drawn from the besieging force. In three hours they were ranged in order of battle, cavalry to the front, to await the enemy, and entrenched themselves. Directly these precautions had been taken the troops taken from the siege were sent back to it.

“ But the Duc de Bourgogne, accompanied by his brother, the Duc de Berri, and the Chevalier de Saint-Georges and the Duc de Vendôme, came to reconnoitre our entrenchments. They came so close that the Prince Eugene ordered a few cannon-balls to be shot at them. The same day we heard that de Chamillard, Minister of War, had arrived at the French army from Versailles to see what was going on. This Minister decided that it would be rash to attack our entrenchments. The French generals only endeavoured to cut off the convoys which came to us from Brussels ; in order to do this they marched to Tournai, where they crossed the Scheldt, and posted themselves behind it, thus cutting off all our communications with Brussels. Only the ford of Ostend was left open, by which were to arrive the munitions the Queen of England was sending, together with fourteen battalions. Milord Marlborough detached De Wit, English major-general, with twelve battalions to go to meet this convoy, upon which depended the reduction of Lille. This convoy was attacked by the

Comte de la Mothe. This general was at the head of twenty thousand men, and had a hundred pieces of artillery in the wood of Vinnendahl, where the Allies had posted themselves to cover the convoy which was defiling behind them. The action was sharp and lasted till night. The French were three times repulsed, but they rallied and charged the escort; but they could not prevent the greater part of the convoy from getting through. The rest was obliged to retire on the road to Ostend. Notwithstanding their superiority of numbers, it is certain that the French were defeated. They lost great numbers, and retreated with their general to Bruges, whence they had set out.

“A few days before the affair of Vinnendahl the Chevalier de Luxemburg, afterwards Prince of Tingri, son of the celebrated Maréchal Luxemburg, and eventually himself a Marshal of France, got a reinforcement into Lille. The chevalier, having sent word to Boufflers that he would be at the gate of Notre Dame, took with him on a very dark night two thousand five hundred horsemen, or dragoons. With him was an officer who spoke Dutch well. When they reached the gate of the besiegers' camp, the advanced sentry called out to him in Dutch: ‘Who goes there?’ The officer replied in the same language that they came from Marlborough's army and were a detachment. They were allowed to advance as far as the gate, where the captain on guard questioned them very narrowly. Unabashed, the officer replied to all the questions, so the captain let them through, and they filed off in a great hurry. Half had already passed through, when a French officer shouted to some troopers who had fallen out of line, ‘Serrez! Serrez!’

“Instantly the captain on guard ordered those who were outside the gate to halt, and, as they would not obey, he fired on them, which exploded the powder the troopers were carrying. The noise which ensued sent the Witgenstein dragoons running up, armed indeed, but only in their shirts. The cavalry which was under

the command of the Prince of Prussia mounted their horses and pursued the enemy which had got in as well as that which was in retreat on Douai; but it could not catch one or the other. Some hundreds of French got into the town, a great many were blown up, and the rest ran away as best they could.

“This adventure had been preceded by another, which narrowly escaped carrying off the Prince Eugene. This Prince had been wounded by a shot above the left eye; he had not yet recovered from the wound. One day, when he was giving orders at the Abbey of Marque, he received a packet of letters; on opening it a very greasy paper fell out, which he let lie without opening it. An officer picked it up, and, having examined it, felt very ill. Immediately it was tested on a dog; his nose was rubbed with it, and he died a quarter of an hour afterwards. Thus did God desire to guard this hero from the basest of treachery.

“The affair made a great noise. Every one congratulated Prince Eugene; but he treated it as a joke, and said that if he received such a missive again he would come to think himself a very important personage, because they were afraid to let him live.

“There was so little fear of being attacked that most of the generals left the main army in order to be present at the assault of the counterscarp, which took place on the night of 7th-8th September. Our people carried it with much loss, and took up their position on it. The attack over, we started to rejoin the main army.

“Unfortunately for us, the guide who had led us thither had fled, and, as it was then only an hour or two after midnight, we found ourselves in rather an unpleasant predicament, and we happened to take just the very road which led us into the midst of the enemy. I was riding a hundred feet perhaps behind Count Lottum, who was in his coach. Suddenly I heard a shout: ‘*Qui va là ?*’

“I confess I felt a little surprised; nevertheless, I comforted myself with the thought that perhaps it





FREDERIC, FIRST KING OF PRUSSIA.





might be a sentry of some Walloon regiment of the Spanish troops. So I replied, 'Officers.'

"We were in a road with hedges mixed with trees, which prevented me making use of a faint moonlight by which I could have reconnoitred whom we had to do with. So it happened that I still rode on. I was no sooner out of the bushes than I found myself near enough to a body of cavalry to see that it could not possibly belong to us, for it was too near the fortress, and it was facing us.

"Perceiving the danger we were in I retired as quickly as possible to Count Lottum and told him what I had seen. Von K——, his senior aide-de-camp, told me I had seen ghosts. Kraut, the second aide-de-camp, treated me much the same. Indeed, a little more, and I should have been ordered back as mad.

"Count Lottum, however, thought it best not to risk anything. He ordered his coachman to turn back, and the Ordnance Officer was detached to see if I had made a mistake. The truth of the fact having been confirmed, Messieurs the aides-de-camp were seized with an extraordinary fright; they made me all sorts of apologies, promising any reparation they could, if we were lucky enough to get out of the danger with which we were threatened. At last we escaped; how I do not quite know, for if only the enemy had advanced we should certainly have slept inside the fortress.

"This is the most noteworthy of what passed after the assault of the counterscarp. On the 11th there was a movement on the part of the enemy, who advanced close to our entrenchments. On our side we prepared to receive them. Their army passed the night under arms, and the next day at dawn it drew up in order of battle, all in vain, against our attack. The Princes of France, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, the Duc de Vendôme and many generals contented themselves with reconnoitring our camp; but, as they came a little too near our trenches, we were obliged to fail in respect to such great Princes, and to send them a few

cannon-shots, upon which they deemed it advisable to retire.

“ . . . I should much have liked to be present at the taking of Lille ; but I was obliged to leave the army some time previously. Dankelmann, my guardian, had received an order from the King to recall me to Berlin. His Majesty intended to give me a post at Court, and, as he was thinking of marrying again, he destined me for an appointment with the new Queen.”

## CHAPTER IV

WHILE Anhalt-Dessau and his gallant Prussians were winning laurels in Flanders, the Court at Berlin was rent with intrigues for the remarriage of the King, now nearly fifty, but in better health for his Carlsbad cure. It was in reality a plot of the minister Wartenberg—though he sedulously kept in the background—against the Prince Royal's party. The Duchess of Zeitz, the King's widowed sister, who lived in Berlin, was put forward to suggest a third wife to Frederic, as there seemed little probability of the Princess Royal having a family. But she bore her husband nine children!

Frederic was, as usual, pliable, and a bride was found in Louisa Dorothea of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, less than half his age. There was a marriage by proxy, a grand entry to Berlin, and fêtes to follow. In Charles von Pöllnitz's opinion they lacked *entrain*, as the new marriage was not popular. "What I found most worthy of notice was a fight of wild beasts at which Their Majesties were present; the Queen killed a bear from her box with an arquebus-shot."

Charles, as we know, had been recalled from the army by the promise of an appointment in the new Queen's household; but when he reached home he found all the places already filled up, and himself left out. He complained to the Grand Marshal of the way in which he had been treated. "He told me not to trouble myself, that in a little while he would get me some appointment with the King"; and, indeed, at the end of that year Pöllnitz was made a Gentleman of the Chamber.

That very day he heard of the death of his step-

father. Von Wense had never regained favour with the King, nor his position at Court, and died in exile on his estate at Zell. "I felt his death very much," writes his step-son, "especially on account of the grief it caused my mother." Louisa Katherine had been forced to marry this husband, to whom she had never spoken; but she had learnt to love him, had stood loyally by him in adversity, as in prosperity, and she "never, for the rest of her life, got over his loss."

Not unnaturally young Charles waxes spiteful over the composition of the Queen's household. It had been made up by Witgenstein, who had given the chief and best-salaried posts to his mother-in-law and sister-in-law.

"The former had never been out of the depths of Wetteravia, except to go to the fair at Frankfurt, where she had put on all the pride of a countess of the Empire, and, though well married, was better fitted to figure at Wetzlar than at Court. . . . Though of the best families, not one of the six maids of honour had ever been at Court; nor were they well-mannered, young, or endowed with any knowledge of the world, yet so fine that they were almost impertinent."

The Grand Master of the Household, Count Schwerin, though well-mannered and used to good society, was not the man to give advice to "a strange princess, little used to the whirl of a big Court." Many of the chamberlains and gentlemen, all of good families, were not counts.

"Which was not to the liking of Counts Wartenberg and Wartensberg, and Witgenstein, though the two first were only simple gentlemen by birth. But the pride of these new Counts had risen to such a height that, in order to set a value on their titles, it was prohibited to any one who was not a Count to dine at the table of the maids of honour, because they were



Countesses, though many of these girls would have been delighted to marry mere gentlemen."

Pöllnitz was ever keenly conscious of his own birth, and, moreover, his step-father's death had awoke the old resentment against Wartenberg, cause of Wense's ruin.

Pöllnitz describes his daily round of duty as Gentleman of the Chamber in the Berlin Schloss, where the King aped the life of the Grand Monarque. Now that he was growing old Frederic rose later, and his gentlemen did not come on duty till they were told by the valets that "day had dawned in His Majesty's apartment," which was between five and six o'clock! They were followed by the doctors, and then by footmen, with the gold table and coffee-set. The beverage was handed round by pages "to all people of quality present at the *levée*. It was absolutely necessary to have two cups, or one ran the risk of incurring displeasure." After half an hour's talk, "the King saluted with his nightcap, and all retired," while he was dressed.

The ceremonial of the midday dinner, which followed upon the morning despatch of business with the Ministers and Council, was elaborate and stately in the extreme. Pöllnitz enters into every detail. The amount of etiquette which had to be endured ere Their Majesties could take a bite or a sup—for which they must have been more than ready—is really astonishing. One sometimes wonders if eighteenth-century Royalty was quite human. It is a relief to hear that His Majesty took an hour's snooze in his study after dinner, like any other old gentleman.

"When he awoke the Gentlemen of the Chamber came into the study of His Majesty. Sometimes the Queen came to see him, sometimes the Prime Minister. . . . In summer the King went out and amused himself with a walk, or with fishing, or else he went hunting, particularly hawking, of which he was very fond.

“In the evening, at six o’clock, His Majesty went to the Queen and stayed there an hour; he then returned to his apartment, to a room called the Tabagie, because it was there that he smoked. Many noblemen had the honour of smoking with him. The King never had supper except upon special occasions. He amused himself playing chess. When the game was finished he conversed very familiarly with the Chamberlain, the Gentlemen of the Chamber, and some privileged courtiers. When the King wished the conversation to cease, he gave orders to the Grand Master of the Wardrobe as to the suit he wished to wear next day; then every one retired, and the valets of the chamber and the wardrobe came to put His Majesty to bed. This was the routine of the service at Court. Never any alterations in the hours which the King had arranged for his doings, unless he was not well.”

No wonder that young Charles, fresh from the excitement of war, the freedom of camp life, and eager for the pleasures of youth, became, as we shall see, exceedingly bored with his daily mill-horse round, of which he thought that “this account, though perhaps rather long, would be less tiresome than that of all the Litanies, and other prayers, at which the Queen was very assiduous all the year.”

For, shortly after marriage, Louisa Dorothea, who had enjoyed gaiety at her brother’s Court, became exceedingly *dévoté*, under the influence of her confessor, Prebendary Borst, and of Franke, Professor of Theology at Halle University, who had started among the Lutherans a sect called the “Pietists.”

“The Court of the Queen soon became like a convent,” relates Pöllnitz, “no one seen there but priests, and prayers and sermons going on continually. . . . All the mummeries displeased the King. An ardent Pietist, she was so zealous for her religion that she thought there was no salvation possible for those who professed

any other. I remember, one day, she was talking about religion to the King, and that she said that she was very grieved at his belonging to the Reformed Church, as therefore he could not be saved. The King seemed rather astonished at this compliment. 'What?' he said, 'you think I shall be damned? How, then, will you speak of me after my death? For you could not say the *selige* [blessed, or saved] King.'

"The Queen was a little embarrassed, and, after a few moments' reflection, she said: 'I would say the dear, deceased King.'

"This reply annoyed the King, who shortly afterwards retired to his apartment. I was that day on duty, and therefore in the King's room with some other noblemen. With some irritation the King told us of the conversation he had had with the Queen. He felt it all the more because he was then seriously considering the reunion of the Protestant churches."

So Frank was sent back to Halle, and Borst "advised not to busy himself so much about the Queen's salvation."

The winter of 1708-9 was a very severe one all over Europe. It brought famine and pestilence to Prussia, so prosperous and industrious. Pöllnitz avers that some two hundred thousand souls died of the plague; but his figures cannot be credited.

While the Queen held prayer-meetings in her apartments and plunged the Court into gloom, the King sent succour to the starving districts, and established quarantine stations on the frontier to prevent the pestilence from spreading.

By way of a little distraction, Frederic, who loved amusing himself, betook himself, with Queen and Court, to the New Year's Fair at Leipzig, much to his young *Kammerherr's* delight.

The Leipzig fairs were the excuse for an informal and lively outing for German rulers bored with the stiff and monotonous ceremonial they imagined themselves

obliged to keep up at their Courts. This year no less than forty-four princes and princesses of ruling houses, including Augustus the Strong, now His Majesty of Poland, and his Queen, foregathered at the great commercial centre of southern Germany. The two Kings and the two Queens put up at the house of a rich merchant, named Apel, who had a magnificent garden outside the gates.

By whichever way you entered Leipzig, "the jewel of Saxony," Pöllnitz found its situation charming. The town itself was small, and, though fortified, of no account as a fortress, though the citadel was garrisoned. But, beyond the fine new stone gates, with their Roman military columns, lay the large suburbs, with Apel's and Pose's gardens, and promenades, "which," says Pöllnitz, with the artificial taste of his period, "though natural, are not the less pleasing." Those in the valley of the Rous, made of fourteen alleys with a fine large lawn in the middle, each alley commanding a different pretty view, were more to his liking. The merchant Pose's garden was full of rare plants cultivated with the greatest care.

"The Leipzig gardens," says Pöllnitz, "are the best in Germany, and pride themselves on forcing nature. . . . At the Easter fair, fruits and flowers and vegetables of all seasons are to be seen. The asparagus is delicious, and extraordinarily large. Another delicacy in Leipzig are the larks; they are sent all over Germany, Poland, Holland, and Denmark. I have been told, though I will not vouch for the truth, that the toll levied on larks coming into Leipzig brings in 12,000 crowns [£3,000] a year. . . . In no country in the world are so many larks caught. From Michaelmas to Martinmas the country is covered with them. Another peculiarity is the quantity of nightingales in which the woods round Leipzig abound. Many are caught and put in cages. The girl in the house in which I lodged had seven, and I saw many in other houses.



“The streets of the town are straight, the houses well built in hewn stone but too overloaded with carving, five or six stories high, the ground-floors consisting of shops in which the foreign merchants display the goods they bring to these annual fairs, at New Year, Easter, and Michaelmas. The rents are very high, and it is difficult to get lodgings at fair times, when the town is so crowded.”

Besides its fairs Leipzig is celebrated for its old university, the rival of Halle, but far more expensive; and Pöllnitz found the students addicted to a gay life and extravagance.

When spring came there was much talk of rejoining the armies, in Italy, or Flanders. The Prince Royal left his young wife, expecting her second child, and went off with Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, being present at glorious but bloody Malplaquet, which, with the capture of Mons and Tournay, sent a thrill through Berlin.

“I wished very much to go on this campaign,” writes young Charles, envious of seeing his brother and his comrades escape from the tedium of court life. “But when I asked leave to start, His Majesty refused me, saying that he had other views for me than the taste for war.”

Doubtless the old King, worried with his gloomy spouse, and regretting the enjoyment of days gone by, was reluctant to lose the company of his amusing young Gentleman of the Chamber.

“I was flattered by his reply, as I was young and therefore somewhat given to vanity. I was fool enough for a few days to think myself in high favour. But I soon saw good reason to perceive my mistake. This is what occurred to undeceive me. The appointment of Gentleman of the Chamber with which the King had honoured me entailed my riding before his coach each time that His Majesty went out or that he went into



the country. I was for some time so unwell that it was impossible for me to get on a horse. Ill-luck would have it that the King, going from Charlottenburg to Berlin, noticed that I was not at my post. This set him so against me that, when I advanced to receive his hat and stick on his arrival, he said the severest things possible to me, the least of which was that, if I neglected my duty a second time he would deprive me of the honour of serving him. Judge how humiliated I felt at such an outburst before eight or ten people who were in the King's room. Indeed, I had some difficulty in stomacking it, and at first thought of resigning my appointment.

"I spoke to Count Witgenstein about it, who somewhat smoothed my bad temper; he showed me that, in behaving as my impulse prompted, I should have to resign all prospect of promotion in the service of my sovereign—service always preferable to any success one might find under a foreign prince. He promised to reinstate me in the King's good graces, and he kept his word.

"For, three days later, the King having returned from Charlottenburg, I found myself alone with him in his room with the chamberlain on duty. His Majesty did me the honour to inquire if I was still angry?

"I replied only by a low bow. The King asked me the second time: 'I ask if you are still angry because I scolded you a few days ago?'

"I replied, with all possible respect, that indeed I had felt extremely the having given reason to His Majesty to be displeased with me; that no one was more desirous to serve him well, and if I have been unfortunate enough lately to fail in my duty, it was in consequence of a very serious indisposition.

"'What!' said the King, 'you should have told me! I would not have found fault with you. After all, if I did so it was only to try you. I was not really as angry as I seemed to be.'

"Jackal, the king's jester, who was present at this

conversation, took up the parable and remarked to the King: 'Good, good Sire, the illness he alleges is an illness to order: the real reason is that he has no riding-horses, because he has no means of keeping any.'

" 'Well,' replied the King, 'I will give him the means. The Grand Chamberlain shall give you an order for forage,' he added, addressing himself to me; 'go and find him.'

"I approached to kiss the King's skirts, but he drew back, and, as I bent down, he put his hand on my head, and said:

" 'You're young. Be good, and I'll see after you.'

"A few days later, and my order was sent me, made out for me to send to Michlemhaft, where it was given out to the other courtiers who had received the same favour."

Towards the end of June the Court was enlivened by two royal visitors, King Frederic IV of Denmark, and the great Augustus of Poland, the former on his way home from sight-seeing in Italy, via Dresden. They had agreed to pay His Prussian Majesty a visit, and, that there might be no difficulty as to precedence, they drew lots as to which was to have the *pas*, and kept to it during the visit, which was spent partly at Potsdam in the beautiful and enlarged Schloss, and partly at Berlin. A very gay time ensued, not unmixed with serious business, for, on the very day that Charles XII was routed at Pultava, the three Kings signed an alliance.

At this time a daughter was born to the Prince Royal. The Court was convulsed with delight. Poets celebrated the little princess's birth and "adulated her even to idolatry; one presented verses to the King in which he compared the new-born Princess to the Child Jesus, and the three monarchs who were present at her baptism to the three Magi."

Charles von Pöllnitz was doubtless not particularly interested in the baby; but in years to come he was

to become very much so, in the Princess Wilhelmina. Between them grew up a real friendship founded on mutual tastes in art and literature, and the Margravine, however caustic she might be about others, always wrote kindly to, and of, her "old Baron."

There was a great scene at this baptism, a dispute as to precedence between the redoubtable Countess Wartenberg and the wife of the Dutch envoy, "who changed the system of Europe."

". . . In all court ceremonies Countess Wartenberg was wont to walk first after the Princesses of the Blood ever since the Duchess of Holstein-Beck had yielded her the *pas* upon payment, by the King, of ten thousand crowns. Never had envoy's wife dreamed of contesting precedence with the wife of the Prime Minister.

"But the Dutchwoman hid behind a door-curtain as the procession of ladies, headed by the Margravine of Schwedt, carrying the infant, left the Princess Royal's apartments. She rushed out of her ambush and cut off the precedence of the Countess Wartenberg, who was following the Margravine."

The Countess inheriting the physique of her father, a Rhine boatman, "seized the interloper by her dress and stopped her. The Dutchwoman, less powerful, but more agile, finding herself unable to move on, adroitly began to make a remark, sprang forward lightly, and disarranged the Countess's *coiffure*." The latter did not belie her origin, but "retaliated with some fisticuffs. The scandal would have gone further had not the Grand Master of the ceremonies separated the combatants. The honours of the field, however, lay with the Countess, who carried off as trophy a feather from her enemy's headdress."

Then followed mutual recriminations and appeals to the Kings, and even to the Dutch States-General. Matters even went so far that Frederic threatened to withdraw his troops from Flanders! Finally, the States gave way, and Lintlo had to apologize to the all-powerful

Countess, whose arrogance increased considerably after this victory. But pride was soon to have a fall.

Charles von Pöllnitz, however, was not to be there to see the ruin of those who had wrecked his step-father's fortune. He himself was to feel, not perhaps wholly undeservedly, the fickleness of royal favour. He left Court in consequence of "some very hard words which the King said to me one day when I had failed to appear on duty as Gentleman of the Chamber."

What brought about this dereliction was Pöllnitz's preference for the society of the Margrave Philip of Schwedt, the King's step-brother, who resided chiefly at his fine house at Schwedt on the Oder. His wife, a Princess of Anhalt-Dessau, sister to the great captain "and that fine Louisa, the Great Elector's first wife," daughter of a Princess of Orange, was connected with Pöllnitz through the latter's grandmother. Highest in rank at Court after the Queen, the Margravine was a charming woman, "an ornament to the Court," he writes. "Nothing could exceed her graciousness to strangers. One pays one's respects to her quite as much from inclination as from duty."

The Margrave was the eldest surviving son of the Great Elector by his second wife. "Nothing," writes Charles, "could equal his wisdom, his uprightness, his sincerity, and the purity of his morals." The pair were very kind and hospitable to their young orphan relative, and Schwedt was a kind of home to him during those years.

"I was with the Margrave as much as I possibly could, and, indeed, I was not with him as much as I should have wished, for I do not think there ever was a prince to whom one could pay one's court with more pleasure and freedom. As the Margrave was nearly always at Schwedt, it happened one day that, being on duty with the King, I decided to remain at the Margrave's Court, instead of going and doing my duty; thus it occurred that whoever was in waiting was obliged



to stay on some time longer. The King having inquired the reason, the gentleman replied that it was because of me, and that I had not even had the consideration to warn any one to take my duty. The King, who was well aware that I missed my service only on account of my attachment to the Margrave, his brother, asked me, directly I entered his presence, if I served his brother or himself, and why I did not do my duty better. I was so bewildered at the manner in which the King spoke those few words to me that, in truth, I do not know what I said to excuse myself; but, whether the King thought my reasons good or bad, he made me no reply. I was so put out by this honour the King did me before several people that, in order to digest my resentment, I determined to go away for a time.

“ I asked His Majesty for permission to travel ; I had no difficulty in obtaining it, on condition that I did not go to France, with which country the King was at war.”



PART II  
*THE VAGRANT*

“ . . . Un nouvel *Oreste* poursuivi par le Sort dans différens Pays ? ”  
PÖLLNITZ.





SOPHIA, ELECTRESS-DOWAGER OF HANOVER.

From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.



## CHAPTER I

HAVING taken leave of His Majesty, Pöllnitz went to spend a few days with his friends at Schwedt, where he bade what was to be a last farewell to the Margrave. The Margravine suggested to him to set out on his travels by paying his respects to the Princesses, her sisters, at Dessau. Pöllnitz, always exploiting his Orange connection for all it was worth, was nothing loth.

“Dessau was a little independent principality, about the size of Huntingdonshire, but with woods instead of bogs; revenue of it perhaps not £20,000, or even £10,000, in Leopold's time. It lies some fourscore miles from Berlin, attainable by post-horses in a day. Leopold, as his father had done, stood by Prussia as if wholly native of it. Lying in such neighbourhood, and being in such affinity to the Prussian House, the Dessauers may be said to have had in later times their headquarters at Berlin. The Leopolds, without neglecting the principality, held by the Prussian army as their main employment. Not neglecting Dessau either; but going thither in winter, or on call otherwise.”

The young Baron found the princesses at Oranienbaum, built by their Orange mother, “a magnificent château, worthy of the princess who had erected it.” He stayed there a week or so, and then went on by Halle to Halberstadt on his way to Hanover. Pöllnitz had bethought him of his interest at the Court of the Electress Sophia, through his cousin Charlotte, her favourite lady-in-waiting.

From Halberstadt to Wolfenbüttel, “a poor town all of wood, except the palace and a fine library;” the



octogenarian Duke of Brunswick at Salzdahl three miles off; Pöllnitz drove down the league-long avenue to pay his respects. He was received with special graciousness, and kept to dinner, finding the Duke with the clearness and vivacity of a man of thirty—great on Roman History, and having translated Racine and Corneille and French novels, and with a good taste in architecture, as his new castle of Salzdahl evinced, with its treasures of pictures and collections. Duke Anthony Ulric, though of a Lutheran house, had gone over to Rome, coveting, scandal said, the Bishopric of Hildersheim—occasionally held by laymen!—and that of Cologne, vacant by ban. Pöllnitz, however, maintains that his conversion was the fruit of years of reflection. May it have been that their intercourse sowed in the young Baron's mind the first seeds of his own apostasy?

It was Duke Anthony's granddaughter's great marriage which led finally to his conversion. When she was betrothed to the Kaiser, Charles VI, a commission of the cleverest theologians in Germany arrived at Wolfenbüttel to convert the timid young girl to what, writes Pöllnitz, "was the only sure salvation." To encourage her, her grandfather promised to change his religion also; his Prime Minister followed suit. The Duke, though Roman Catholic at heart, hesitated. Not till his granddaughter had reached Barcelona, on her way to Madrid, did her persuasive letter finally determine him. "He showed his granddaughter," unctuously writes Pöllnitz, "that, in obtaining for her one of the first crowns in the world, he had, at the same time, laboured to secure her another more valuable, and of longer duration."

Pöllnitz went on to Brunswick, only six miles along a straight, tree-planted road, to the old, old town, added to by Henry the Fowler. One of the Hanseatic cities, it had lost its liberty but some thirty years previously, conquered by the Duke of Wolfenbüttel. There was only one palace to see, and the lofty monument opposite

to the church of S. Alaise, to Duke Henry, surnamed the Lion, and surmounted by the statue of his pet lion. "The Duke having died and been buried in the church, the lion went to the church door, and, finding it shut, tried with all his might to get in. It was found impossible to remove him, and finally he died on the same spot of grief at having lost his master," chronicles our Baron.

He went on to Zell to see his mother, who was living in retirement on her third husband's estate and where his connection, Count Schulemburg, was Governor for King George. The capital of the little duchy, which had passed to the Elector of Hanover by his marriage with the only child of the last Duke, was the most tolerant of towns, "where," writes Pöllnitz, "both Catholics and Protestants compose the cathedral chapter, and use the same fane." Even his most Protestant Majesty of Prussia, when he came on a visit to Zell, both listened to a sermon, assisted at mass, and was blessed by the Blessed Sacrament."

Society at Zell was pleasant, and, for the first time, Charles von Pöllnitz found himself in a French atmosphere not uncongenial to him. The Provençal Duchess, Eleonore d'Olbreuse, had attracted many of her countrymen to her Court, and there were both French Roman Catholic and French Protestant churches. Indeed, so French was the society that Pöllnitz could quite believe an anecdote told him of the late Duke's reign. Twelve guests were dining at the palace, when one remarked that all were French but the host: "Indeed, Monseigneur, this is rather amusing: only you are a foreigner here!"

A few miles from Zell the late Duke's heiress, the daughter of the popular French Duchess, languished in her lonely little country-house among the fens. Imprisoned by her ruthless husband, separated from, and unknown to, her children, plundered by her servants, she was to drag out for another ten years her life-in-death, to die a shrieking maniac, to be refused, first

sepulchre, and then Christian burial by the implacable George. Such was the shadow which hung over pleasant little French Zell.

Pöllnitz, as we have seen, had determined to seek the help of his father's cousin, Charlotte von Pöllnitz, at Hanover. Taken on as lady-in-waiting by the Electress Sophia after the death of the Queen of Prussia, Charlotte had as much influence with the mother as she had had with the daughter. Her cousin hoped she might secure him an appointment at Court.

In less than five hours he drove across the heathland from Zell and found Hanover a pleasant town upon the Aller, which divided it into two quarters, the old and the new. A few years previously the Elector had finished his country palace of Herrenhausen, "not in proportion," thought Pöllnitz, "to the magnificent gardens which surround it, undoubtedly the finest in Europe. There is a fountain to be seen which spurts higher than the famous fountain at S. Cloud, always considered the highest in the world."

Between Herrenhausen and the city he saw the two other country-houses, the Fantasie and Monbrillant, built by two sisters-in-law: one by Frau von Kilmansegg, the mistress of the Elector, and the other by Countess Platen ("the ornament of Hanover," says Pöllnitz), who had occupied the same position with his father. She was the jealous enemy who contrived the ruin of the "Duchess of Ahlden" and the murder of her lover. Pöllnitz blinks at the moral failings of these "two ladies, who really did credit to Germany by their beauty, their manners, and their characters." (!)

The Hanoverian family consisted of the Elector—his wife shut up at Ahlden, and Frau von Kilmansegg in possession of him—his son George, with his pretty, clever young wife, Caroline of Anspach (who had had the moral courage to decline to be Empress of Germany, as she would have been obliged to change her religion), who was spending the happiest years of her life at her father-in-law's Court with her little girls and her son

Frederic, the heir, afterwards Frederic, Prince of Wales.

But we have left the most commanding figure of the Court of Hanover to the last. The Electress Sophia was heiress presumptive to the throne of England, through her Stuart mother, Elizabeth, "Queen of Hearts," daughter of James I, and wife of the hapless "Winter King" of Bohemia, turned adrift on Europe after a year's reign, while his Rhenish patrimony was the battleground of the religions during the Thirty Years War.

The Electress was eighty years of age when Pöllnitz first went to Hanover, "but she did not feel any of those infirmities which are inseparable from great age." She was very erect, a great walker—at seventy-four she walked for two hours every day—and quoted about herself the Dutch proverb, "Creaking wagons go on for a long time." "She had kept," writes Pöllnitz, "a vivacity of mind and a memory which was really prodigious. She spoke French, English, Italian, as well as her native language. She had, moreover, a fine intellect, which she had cultivated by much reading." He hardly does justice to what Spittler, in his "History of Hanover," calls her "fundamentally Germanic, superior to princes' enlightenment" (*Teuschgründliche überfürstliche Aufklärung*).

Sophia, in her youth, spoke six languages, and had read and studied much at her brother's Court at Heidelberg, where she found refuge after the wanderings of her stormy childhood. At the palace of Osnabrück, her home as wife of the heir to Hanover, she discoursed with von Helmont; in her son's gardens at Herrenhausen she walked and talked with Leibnitz the philosopher. She read Spinoza, Montaigne, Clarendon's "History of England" (which she liked because "she knew the people he mentioned"), all the memoirs and novels of the period, and worthy Bishop Burnett, "good enough to skim through, but not to read." Grote, the author and diplomatist, was her friend. To



visit her came Marlborough, "the easiest, most civil, most obliging," and Peter the Great, who talked mathematics, while "she held her tongue."

She was, however, no real metaphysician or theologian. Her philosophy was only ethical. A Calvinist, though her husband had been a Lutheran, she communicated four times a year, hated Roman Catholics, and upheld her daughter-in-law for refusing Charles VI. Much attached to her daughter, the Queen of Prussia, after the latter's death Caroline somewhat filled the gap. Her niece, the Raugravine Louise, one of her brother's many children by Louise von Degenfeld, lived with her, and she corresponded voluminously with the latter's half-sister at Versailles, widow of Monsieur, the brother of Louis XIV. With her son she had no influence; he probably never forgot that she had planned his marriage with the errant Dorothea of Zell; but her son-in-law Frederic of Prussia—"that fool," she called him—always listened eagerly to advice from his astute "most gracious mamma."

The acquaintance of this clever old lady, and his intercourse with her, must have been an education in itself to the eighteen-year-old, nimble-witted young Pöllnitz, eager to absorb from his surroundings. He appreciated her wit and intelligence, her versatility, and, above all, the keen sense of humour with which she sparkled. Sophia, on the other hand, liked the lad, finding him congenial. After her husband's death she lived entirely at Herrenhausen at the Orangery. We can picture Pöllnitz pacing by the side of the handsome old lady with the aquiline nose and the abundant grey hair, in the greenhouse, the largest in Europe, or along the just-finished Dutch garden-paths, among the summer-houses and grottoes, between the clipped hedges surrounding the out-door theatre, and through the "wilderness," listening to the nightingales, watching the swans and ducks.

Just at the time of Pöllnitz's visit Sophia was very busy with English politics, trimming between the "wigs"



and the Tories. Her one remaining ambition—for her wish to see her husband live to be Elector had been gratified—was to die Queen of England. She missed it by a few weeks.

The young Baron enjoyed himself at Hanover. The Elector was naturally hospitable, “and during the stay I made at Court seemed to honour me with his special protection.” Carnival time soon came on, the “season” at the German Courts of the eighteenth century, and which lasted from Christmas to Easter, and Pöllnitz describes the whirl of amusement.

“The opening was the second day of January by a French play, after which there were cards and a reception at Madame l’Electrice till ten at night. The next day was the ‘ridotto,’ an imitation of those of Venice [in which gayest city of Europe the Elector had sojourned much] that is to say, a public ball where every one can come, provided they are masked and unarmed. The ball was held in the Town Hall; there was one every day during the Carnival. One played at ombre and at piquet in the ridotto room; in another, bassette was played. There was a third, in which a contractor provided refreshments, and a fourth room adjoined where one could get coffee, chocolate, and liqueurs, etc. I went in greatly for all the amusements of the Carnival; I was of an age when pleasures form one’s principal business, especially if one had money enough to be beyond the reach of the uneasiness which the lack of this precious metal causes. I had collected a goodly store, with which I cut a fine enough figure; but soon I was obliged to pull in my horns, and that in consequence of an unfortunate experience of which I was the victim. I wished to tempt Fortune by gambling. At first I played with a good deal of luck, but the chances turned, and I soon found myself personally much embarrassed, unable either to continue my travels or to turn my steps backwards, and still less to remain at Hanover. I then did what most young men usually do in a similar plight;

that is to say, I made several borrowings, always to my disadvantage.

“At last I was obliged to confess my situation to my mother, under whose guardianship I still was. I had much trouble in extracting from her the money I required.”

Probably Countess von Wense was not uninfluenced by the reports she received of her son from her cousin. Charlotte von Pöllnitz was in possession of all her Dutch mother's fortune and estates as the last survivor of the latter's family. Her heirs were Maurice and Charles, but the masterful lady kept a firm grip on her money, and had no notion of letting any of it fall into the sieve-like hands of her gambling young cousin.

However, he wrote to his mother “such touching letters, that she felt she was still a mother, and, after having kept me waiting a little while, she was kind enough to give me the sums I had need of.”

“This little upset came very *mal à propos*. Madame l'Electrice had been so kind as to ask Madame de France for a passport, that I might get leave to go to Paris; but, as it was only granted for two months, it was impossible for me to use it, having been obliged to spend all the time in setting my money affairs in order.”

Pöllnitz had not been many weeks at Hanover when he heard a piece of news from Berlin, imparted direct by the King to his “most gracious mamma,” which must have pleased him immensely, to wit, the downfall of the man who had wrecked the family fortunes.

When the King returned from a visit to Augustus at Dresden, writes Pöllnitz, he found—

“The Queen in a furious state of displeasure with Countess Wartenberg, who, since her victory over the Dutch ambassadress, forgot herself more than ever with the Queen; so far that the Queen one day ordered her out of the room, and never to re-enter it.

“ ‘Ha ! we shall see about that ! ’ was the reply.

“ The incensed Queen ordered her to be thrown out of window. Happily no one was there, so that she had time to retire.”

After that she had another skirmish with another diplomat's wife. The King began to have enough of her airs and graces, and the determined enemy of the Wartenbergs, the Prince Royal, was working ceaselessly to undermine them. But their downfall was accomplished by the two Kameckes, one Grand Master of the Wardrobe, and the other his clever courtier-cousin who wormed himself into the King's favour by letting him beat him at chess, and got himself made Minister of State.

The Wartenbergs were arrested, clapped into Spandau, and then exiled to their estates. They had come to Court with nothing. The pair left it with millions, besides a pension of 24,000 crowns so long as they lived at Frankfurt. The Countess carried off 50,000 crowns' worth of diamonds, of which more later on. Wartenberg made a present of his little gem of a palace on the river-bank to the King, who, however, insisted on paying for it, and the Crown Prince gave it to his wife, who called it Montbijou. “ It was the only thing,” writes Pöllnitz, “ that the Wartenbergs could not carry off.

“ The money my mother had had the kindness to send me put me in a position to continue my travels.” Just at that moment Joseph I died, and a meeting of the Electors was called for August at Frankfurt to elect a new Emperor. Pöllnitz was seized with the wish to attend the great ceremony. Meanwhile, as Paris, the Mecca of the gilded youth of the period, was out of the bounds of possibility, he decided to make a tour in the Low Countries, where The Hague was then a great resort of pleasure-seekers.

## CHAPTER II

PÖLLNITZ set out for his first tour outside the Empire by way of Minden, a strong fortress, Herford, Lipstadt, Horn, and struck the Rhine at Wesel, "one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, which the King was still strengthening." Thence by boat to Nimeguen, and, without stopping to Utrecht and Leyden. This he thought the finest city in the United Provinces, with its long, broad streets, "extremely clean," divided by canals, a valuable library, a Hall of Anatomy—

"Where one sees freaks of all descriptions. . . . But, though the town is very fine, I think that it must be one of the dullest places to live in, in all Holland: everywhere there reigns a certain look of sickness, which makes one melancholy. It is not that the townsfolk are not as healthy as elsewhere; but their custom of always being in their dressing-gowns and walking in the streets dressed like that makes one take them for convalescents."

He went on the twelve miles to The Hague, equally pretty either by road or by canal, between fine country-houses and beautiful gardens on either hand. "The Hague," he writes, "one may well call the finest village in Europe, for neither walls nor ramparts are to be seen, and it is of the pleasantest spots in Holland. A stay there is delightful."

The young Baron spent a month there, enjoying life exceedingly. He found himself among kith and kin, the three branches of Nassau cousins, all descended



from his great-grandfather, Maurice of Nassau, and his mistress, Anne of Mechelin, to wit the Counts Ovverkerke, Zeist, and Laleck. Other reigning houses had followed the example of Louis XIV and legitimized their bastards.

Further, there was much affinity between the Prussian and the Dutch nobility, and the young Gentleman of the Chamber to King Frederic found himself welcomed in society.

“In this town the inhabitants are well-mannered, more sociable, and more amenable than in the rest of Holland. The aristocracy is looked up to, and merit does not count for naught. The ladies look well, dress well, and have something better than mere beauty as an attraction. . . . Most gentlefolk meet every evening alternately at each other’s houses. Their assemblies would be more brilliant than they generally are if they were less mixed; but the freedom of the country, the wealth of the inhabitants, place the townspeople on a level with, and sometimes even above, the gentlefolk.”

He thought the houses plain and irregular, except the Stadtholder’s palace, where the States-General met, with its fine halls all hung with flags and standards which the Republic had taken from its enemies.

“But there are no houses which looked like a mansion. The interiors are very common, and not very comfortable; anterooms are unknown; the servants spend their time in the kitchen or in the hall. As for a porter, no such thing is seen except at an ambassador’s.

“There are many Jews at The Hague, who make a great show. It is the Portuguese Jews who spend the most money: these gentlemen have carriages like an ambassador’s, magnificent houses and gardens, and they very often entertain with all the delicacies and magnificence possible. They are received everywhere, and only differ from Christians because they have more



wealth and spend more money. I knew one of them, named Duliz, who was very much liked ; he was kind and generous, extremely charitable, assisting every one who was in want without troubling very much if he was a Jew or a Christian who shared his largesse. I know that he even gave money to keep up a church, as if it had been a synagogue."

Pöllnitz took a turn from The Hague to Delft. A road paved with brick and bordered by elms led thither, but he chose the water-way, the usual route, and to him a novelty, taking one of the canal-boats which plied regularly. He visited the tomb of the murdered Great Stadtholder, William the Silent, saw the china-factory, and slept at Rotterdam, after "walking about the beautiful quays planted with fine avenues, and bordered on either side with fine houses." He saw what was to be seen at Dordrecht, and then took boat again from Rotterdam to Amsterdam, "the most famous town in all Holland. Its size, its immense trade and its wealth are the admiration of all visitors."

His King being expected on a visit to The Hague, Charles carefully arranged to be back again there before his arrival. The Hague was in the eighteenth century a diplomatic Clapham Junction, a political clearing-house. At the present time it was seething with parleyings. Louis XIV, weary of war and the world, was wishful for peace. The trend of feeling in Europe was leading up to the Congress of Utrecht, and the object of Frederic's visit was to finally adjust with Prince John William of Nassau, the heir of William of Orange, the long-disputed heritage of that sovereign.

King Frederic came by Rotterdam, saluted by guns, to Delfshavn, where he found his yacht and many others, which had come round from The Hague. In this gaily-painted vessel, with its high prow and great weather-board, he sailed to Delft, where coaches were in readiness. At The Hague he drew up at the Palais de la Vieille Cour, bequeathed to him by William III

of England. It was a large building at the bottom of a courtyard formed by two projecting wings, fronted by high arcades joined by balustrades which separated the court from the street. Inside there were fine rooms with good pictures, and behind a large garden, which Frederic, a great gardener, had much improved.

A guard was mounted at the palace, and the next day, the King, after attending a sermon, received a deputation from the States-General. They were saluted by the guard, and at the foot of the staircase received by the Grand Marshal of the Household, the chamberlains and gentlemen of the chamber. Of the latter Pöllnitz was one, back again in favour and on duty, though temporarily, and went with the King next day to Houstardyk, another house, ten leagues out of Amsterdam, which Frederic had inherited from William of Orange.

Here the King awaited the Prince of Frisia, the Stadtholder, who was coming to meet him from the army in Flanders. Instead of the Prince, however, came a courier with the overwhelming news that John William had been drowned in crossing a ford at Maerdijk, near Dordrecht. Pöllnitz gives details which he heard:

“The boat had capsized by a sudden furious gust of wind when only thirty or forty feet from land. As the sea was rough and the Prince could not swim, he could not reach land. He clung for a while to the mast, but was swept away, and the weight of his clothes and the waves caused him to sink, and he disappeared at the moment that a boat was approaching to save him. His body was not found till eight days later. . . . One cannot express the regret that this unexpected death caused in Holland. There was universal mourning.”

The kind-hearted old King was very much shocked by the news, all the more as it was announced to him suddenly by a too-zealous courtier, “who did not know his high-mindedness,” and thought that he might not

be sorry to be rid of a Prince with whom he was in litigation. He was so upset that the doctors deemed it advisable to bleed him. He was filled with remorse lest the wish he had expressed to see the Prince at The Hague might not have caused him to hurry his journey in bad weather, and at once sent a courier to condole with the widowed Princess who was left with one child, a daughter, but who was *enceinte*. He offered a division of the estates in dispute between himself and the Princess, which, however, she eventually would not accept. Whereupon the King put off all settlements till her son, who was born in September, should be of age. He withdrew to the country-seat of Dieren, to which he considered himself entitled. Pöllnitz went with him, "having had the honour of paying his respects to him scrupulously all the time that His Majesty passed at The Hague. At Dieren I took leave of the King, little thinking that it was to be for ever."

This death was followed by another which also was much felt by Frederic. It was that of Wartenberg. The King had been hankering after the disgraced favourite all during his Dutch tour, and had written to him offering him his recall if he would return without his impossible wife. "But Wartenberg," says Pöllnitz, "declined to give up a woman who was dear to him," and died soon afterwards. By his own wish he was buried at Berlin in the Reformed Church, close to Henrietta Duhamel, whose sister-in-law, Countess Wense, he had so injured. King Frederic, who had been very fond of him, wept when he saw the funeral pass.

Pöllnitz moved on towards Frankfurt and Imperial ceremonies, via Dusseldrop, where, as a courtier of the King of Prussia, he was well received by the Elector Palatine, who had just taken up his residence there. Whereas former Electors had preferred to live at Heidelberg or Mannheim, John William liked Düsseldorf best, where, like other German and Italian princelets of the day, he had built himself a copy of Versailles. It stood in a charming situation five leagues from the

city, on a hill in a forest commanding a bird's-eye view of Cologne and the Rhine Valley. It was erected by Italian workmen, for the Elector's wife was Italian; but the rooms, his guest found, uncomfortably arranged, as in Italy, "a magnificent house, but full of defects."

Pöllnitz admired the large collection of pictures, which included some Rubens and other Dutch masters, and especially a "Last Judgment" of Rubens painted out of gratitude for Duke Wolfgang of Neuburg, the Elector's ancestor, who had extricated the artist from the clutches of the Holy Office in Spain.

At Düsseldorf Pöllnitz spent a pleasant time, laying the foundations of future introductions to various Courts. For the Elector had married the daughter of Cosmo III, Duke of Tuscany, and one of his sisters the Emperor Leopold I, and another Charles II of Spain.

Pöllnitz found Frankfurt one of the largest cities in Europe, but full of anomalies. To begin with, it was built chiefly of wood, stuccoed over. Hence frequent conflagrations occurred, chiefly owing to the Jews. For these, who constituted a large proportion of the inhabitants, were locked up every evening in their own quarter of the town, packed in tall houses, and dared not open their gates for fear of being robbed. So it was impossible to render them any assistance during a fire. On the other hand, they were permitted to have fine synagogues, while the Roman Catholics, who possessed all the churches, sent the Reformed Protestants across the river to Hanau to hold their services and have their children baptized.

As a town to stay in Pöllnitz thought "that there was no place more boring, and few German cities where the people are so coarse. The bourgeois have an unsurpassed affectation, and their language is insupportable."

But the excitement caused by the Imperial Election, the great concourse of electors, ambassadors, princes and visitors, was quite to the Baron's mind. The narrow old streets were full of grand equipages of



divers notabilities of many nationalities, Pöllnitz was pleased to find that Count Dohna, the Prussian envoy, outshone all the others, with his five coaches drawn by six horses apiece, his forty gentlemen, his seventy-two pages, forty-eight valets, and two beadles—which latter item strikes one as rather inadequate compared with the rest. There was such rivalry and dispute between Dohna and the Prussian Government representative who had accompanied him that the latter died of chagrin and apoplexy in a few hours.

All the Electors were present except those of Cologne and Bavaria, kept away by the war, in which they had sided with France, and protesting fiercely, but in vain, against the legality of the election in their absence. So high did the feeling against them run at the Council that the Bohemian envoys calmly proposed that their chairs should be broken up to show their disgrace.

The Council of the Electors opened on August 25th. It was preceded by a difficulty with the Papal Nuncio, who arrogated to himself the first place, and then declined to recognize the new Protestant Electors of Prussia, Hanover and Brunswick, or to meet any of them. Informal conversations took place in a garden. Finally, alarmed by threats that the Prussian troops in North Italy should march into the Papal States, he gave way. More informal discussions till October. Augustus of Poland wanted the Imperial crown for his son, and England had a finger in the pie unofficially. Things had gone so badly with Archduke Charles in Spain, and the expense of settling him on that throne would be so great, that “a new policy had been adopted by the English Minister: they were treating secretly with France, and determined to recompense Charles for Spain by giving him the Imperial throne.” Therefore, “it was unnecessary,” adds Pöllnitz, “for the Electors to sing *Veni Creator*, etc., to inspire them in their choice. They had resolved to elect Charles.”

On October 10th all foreigners, except those in the suites of the Electors, were ordered out of the city





"MADAME," ELIZABETH CHARLOTTE, DOWAGER-DUCHESS OF ORLEANS.

"Il est bon, puis qu'on voit mon visage et mes yeux  
Que l'on apprenne aussi quel est mon caractère  
Quand il s'agit des droits de mon rang glorieux  
J'ai l'âme délicate, et quelques fois altière  
Et mon cœur en revanche au foible, au malheureux  
Ne se montre jamais que tendre, et de bonnaire."



before sunset. The Papal Nuncio, obliged to retire, went to sulk at Aschaffenburg. Next day all the church bells rang simultaneously for five hours! The garrison and citizens lined the streets. All the Electors and envoys drove in pomp and state, and in full dress—except the Bohemians, in mourning for the late Kaiser—to the Römerhall. There they changed into semi-ecclesiastical ermine-lined robes, and, with the envoys, rode, all in due precedence, on superbly accoutred horses, to S. Barthelmi, and heard mass. During the Elevation the Protestant Electors retired into the Chapel of the Conclave. Then there was a solemn oath-taking on the gospel of all the Electors, and a three-hours' conference, all being shut up in the chapel.

They then returned to the church and took up a position on a scarlet-draped stand in red velvet and gold chairs. When the loud shouts of "Long live the Kaiser!" rang through the church, and the cannon thundered on the ramparts, and the soldiers fired salvoes in the streets, it was Charles they were acclaiming as "King of the Romans and of Spain."

Directly the election ceremonies were over Pöllnitz hurried off on a sad errand. Louisa Katharine von Wense's chequered life had come to an end. She was but in early middle age, and her youngest and favourite son had not been with her at her last moments.

Though Charles had not allowed this sad event to interfere with his enjoyment of the great occasion—he never allowed anything, at any time, to do that—he writes that "this death touched me very much, all the more as it was the first thing in my life which really seriously grieved me." Into the lad's egotistical, self-centred, frivolous existence had come the first sorrow—a sorrow probably not untinged with remorse for the trouble he had but recently caused his mother in worrying her for money.

Pöllnitz went off to Zell, where his brother was, and remained there some time winding up their mother's estate. But when he heard that the coronation of the

new Emperor was fixed for Christmastide, he returned to Frankfurt by way of Cassel.

In the army of Flanders he had soldiered with the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel—connected by marriage with the house of Brandenburg—and his two sons. So Pöllnitz was made welcome in the old palace in the pretty town on the Fulda, surrounded by ramparts, with its orange-tree-clad castle terrace. But, if the young Baron's visit gave pleasure, it also gave pain. He was the bearer, almost straight from Holland, of the sad details of the tragedy on the Maerdijk which had widowed the Landgrave's daughter. The Hesse-Cassel family circle was a large one, often meeting at the Landgrave's Court, "making it," says Pöllnitz, "one of the most brilliant in Germany, not only by the grand style of the family, but still more by their pleasant manners to every one, especially to strangers. I left Cassel with regret."

He reached Frankfurt a few days before the Emperor, and describes at length his reception and the elaborate ceremonies of the coronation at S. Barthelmi, the Emperor in crimson and ermine robes like the Electors, and with the diamond cross of his ancestors and the mantle and sword of Charlemagne.

Certain prophets, tells Pöllnitz, drew portents from certain incidents they observed. The first was that the Kaiser made his entry into the city in deep mourning for his brother Joseph. They foretold that it was mourning because he knew that he should be the last Emperor of his house. The second was that, as Charles left the church, arrayed with all the symbols of Empire, the sword of Charlemagne nearly fell out of its sheath. The Elector of Treves—of the house of Lorraine—caught it, and replaced it before it had quite fallen. The same dealers in prophecy foretold, anent this, that the Emperor would never enjoy peace, but would always find himself obliged to draw the sword in his own defence.

At one of the windows of the Römerhall stood Charles VI, and gazed on the throng which crowded at

the windows and which overflowed the square. Below Count Pappenheim, Viceroy of Saxony, as Grand Marshal of the Empire, played his part.

“ Mounted on a very fine horse, he galloped into a pile of corn in a corner of the square ; he filled a silver measure with it, returned to the middle of the square, and threw the corn and the measure to be scrambled for by the populace. Then appeared the Elector Palatine, surrounded by his guards and preceded by his Court : he rode into a kitchen, built specially in the great square, found there an ox on the spit, cut it into bits, and, placing it on a golden dish, carried it to the Emperor’s table. Count Zinzendorff, deputy of the Elector of Hanover, Treasurer of the Empire, with Imperial Guards rode round the square throwing special gold and silver medals from sacks of cloth-of-gold, hanging from his pommels. Count Dohna, representing the Elector of Brandenburg, with all his retinue and the Imperial Guard, rode into the middle of the square, where was set on a table a basin and a jug of silver-gilt full of water and a wet napkin, which he took to the banqueting-hall and gave to the Emperor to wash with. Count Kinsky, envoy of the King of Bohemia, cup-bearer of the Empire, took a gold goblet, and, fetching wine from a fountain in the shape of an Imperial eagle, set up in the middle of the square, gave it to the Emperor to drink.”

Then followed the ultra-ceremonious banquet in the Römerhall.

Pöllnitz was on the point of leaving Frankfurt when he received the sad news of the death of the Margrave Philip of Schwedt. He says that King Frederic’s envoy, to avoid the expense of mourning-coaches and liveries, kept back the news of the death, and did not inform the Emperor till the day before he left. Pöllnitz himself “ felt very much the loss I have sustained, as I was attached to this Prince,” who, indeed, had been a good friend to the young man.



“He died at Schwedt, where he usually resided, and was all the more regretted as none was worthier of a long life. He was always sincerely fond of the King; he loved his country; and, if his advice had been followed, the power of the Ministers would have been curbed, and the people been happier.”

Death has now removed the only two people who could check the young man in his headlong plunge into the whirlpool of Paris dissipation. Directly he had heard that he had been granted a passport for France, he started off for the Mecca of his desire. He halted at Düsseldorf, where he found the Court returned from the coronation, and went on to Cologne, where he was welcomed by a fellow-countryman, one Hoppe, the king's revenue officer for those parts. “He put me up and treated me very well.” But Pöllnitz was in a fever to reach Paris. Cologne did not appeal to him from the first. He was annoyed by the custom-house authorities.

“A few companies of inferior soldiers on guard at the gates, and at the Town Hall, insolently search the trunks of new arrivals. This is indeed the greatest inconvenience, for, only two hundred yards from the inn one has to unfasten one's trunks, which they rummage, putting one's things topsy turvy. One is obliged to put everything right again, and then those who have caused the confusion have the impertinence to ask you for a drink. In other towns a clerk accompanies you to the inn where you are going to stay, and you show him what you have. But the Imperial cities always wish to do everything in a peculiar way.”

The young Baron found Cologne the dullest city in Europe—

“Dirty, and badly paved. . . . One hears nothing but the sound of church bells, one sees no one but priests, monks, and students, many of whom earn alms by

singing. . . ." The cathedral "would be the largest and finest edifice in Europe, were it finished, but the state of it does little credit to its chapter, the most illustrious in Germany, all the canons being Princes or Counts of the Empire, and proving sixteen quarterings."

As for the famous relics of the Three Kings, Pöllnitz thought "the devotion of the inhabitants for them so extraordinary that it would not be well to doubt their authenticity when in company of a gathering of the citizens." The only society was that of the canons, keeping their residence. "The people were coarse. There are rich merchants who feed well and drink better. Perhaps they also amuse themselves. I did not try if they did; you know our German pride does not allow of our humbling ourselves down to them."

At Cologne Pöllnitz received his passport, and lost no time in starting. But the war in Flanders obliged him to reach France by a roundabout route. He took boat by the Rhine to Dordrecht, thence by canal to Antwerp, "the finest city in the Netherlands," the cathedral a "treasure-house of pictures," mostly to be destroyed by fire a few years later.

Thence to Brussels, "the capital of Brabant," the people more civil than in any other city in the Low Countries; people of quality coming in from the country to winter at their "hotels." The Palais Royal very large, on a hill, with a fine view over the Park and gardens; the Hôtel de Ville very fine. But—

"All the houses old, except that, and the churches, not a building worth speaking about. A great discomfort the inequality of the ground; one is always obliged to be going up or down hill . . . one might indeed call it the Monte Cavallo; also the city uncomfortable, so few police about; one is always either in the mud, or stifled in the dust."

At Valenciennes Pöllnitz found himself at last upon

French soil. For it was the capital of Hainault, French Flanders. Here he made his first acquaintance with French officers, his late foes. "The Prince de Tingri was governor, son of the celebrated Maréchal de Luxemburg, whose glory our writers have tried to tarnish by accusing him of having won so many victories by being in league with the devil." The Prince de Tingri, as Chevalier de Luxemburg, had greatly distinguished himself during the late war, especially at the siege of Lille, at which Pöllnitz had assisted.

"He got a convoy into the town during the night, which helped much to make the siege drag on. Every officer considers him the most distinguished general in France. . . . I cannot help relating his politeness and gracious manners, and I have great reason to congratulate myself on the kindness he showed me."

Tingri presented the young Baron to the Archbishop Elector of Cologne, who, having taken sides with France, had been forced to find a refuge in French dominions. "His Highness gave me a most gracious welcome. He remembered knowing my father," who had been quartered near Cologne at the time of Charles's birth. "I saw in course of conversation that he would much rather have been in his city of Bonn than in a French fortress."

Three days did Pöllnitz stay with the Archbishop, then went on by Courtray, S. Quentin, and Compiègne, through royal forests, to S. Denis. As he drove out of the little town under the shadow of the great abbey, Pöllnitz "at last had the pleasure of seeing what I had so long passionately desired, the famous city of Paris."

### CHAPTER III

“Cet pays est mon centre !” wrote Pöllnitz, after years of Paris.

Ardently had he longed to reach it, eagerly had he yearned for its brilliancy, its pleasures. Paris, for nearly half a century, had been the centre of the solar system over which the Roi Soleil shone.

No such worship as was paid to Louis le Grand has ever been accorded to monarch, before or since. To penetrate even into the outer courts of his temple was an ambition, a delirious dream of bliss. Louis, as far as he possibly could, had centralized everything. France was Paris ; Paris was the King.

Great aristocrats of ancient race, of vast estates, owning thousands of serfs, men whose grandfathers had ruled almost as sovereigns on their domains, ate their hearts out when exiled to them away from Court. To haunt the halls of Versailles, to hold a ewer or a napkin for the King, was the giddy height of their ambition. There were no longer any nobles, only courtiers. Court was the only way to royal favour, to advancement. Assiduity or talent in camp, study, or bureau was of little avail compared with the attendance in the monarch's ante-chamber. “I do not see him often at Court,” was Louis's cold rejoinder to the advocacy of an applicant for office.

Our young Baron was heart and soul a courtier, “never happy away from Court, and yet never happy in it.” He had already had a foretaste of Versailles in Courts where the rulers aped it. Now, at last, he found himself in the Holy of Holies.

He did not linger long in Paris itself—



“The first city in the world, as it is the capital of the first realm in Christendom. . . . I was too anxious to see the celebrated château of Versailles. I had conceived such a great idea of this château; I was so convinced that everything there must be in gold and azure.”

He drove up by the magnificent broad avenue, and between the stables, and “saw a sight which gave some idea of the master of these sumptuous buildings.” But the interior astonished him most, “. . . many châteaux joined together.” The whole Royal Family, still, in that year, fairly numerous, was comfortably lodged with guard-rooms, anterooms, apartments, bedrooms, studies, dressing-rooms. Also comfortably lodged were their head officials, the Princesses’ ladies; the majority of the nobles of the Court had their apartments there also, cramped, indeed, but comfortable. “Indeed, I was assured that, when Louis XIV was at Versailles, some twenty thousand persons slept each night in the château, and in the outbuildings. The apartments so well arranged that all this army was not uncomfortable.”

Pöllnitz had not thrown away his time at Hanover by ingratiating himself with the clever old Electress. Through her he had been specially recommended to her niece, *Madame*, of France, widow of Monsieur, Louis’s only brother, the Duke of Orleans.

Forty years before Charlotte Elizabeth, daughter of Charles, Elector Palatine, a plain, plump German *Mädchen*, something of a tomboy, and dubbed Liselotte by her family, had come across the Rhine to marry the French Prince she had never seen, and who was not unsuspected of being cognizant that his first wife, Henrietta of England’s, recent death was due to poison. She had been the baby born at Exeter during the stress of the civil war, carried off by a disguised lady-in-waiting to France, and whom her father, Charles I, never saw.

A faithful, loyal spouse to a very faithless husband, the shrewd, common-sense, rather downright and caustic, wife of a foolish fop, Charlotte Elizabeth had also, till the



advent of Madame de Maintenon, enjoyed both the friendship of her brother-in-law—"notre grand homme," she calls him—and had a certain amount of influence over him. Both loved dogs and horses and hunting, and Liselotte was never so happy in her younger days as when following the royal chase in the forests of Fontainebleau. But Louis did not consider her feelings when he carried fire and sword into her Palatinate, driving her brother from his capital.

She was a strange mixture, as she had painted herself in her innumerable letters, of irreproachable morals in a vicious atmosphere, and of a startling lack of decorum and modesty. The Duc de Saint-Simon, her son's intimate friend, calls her—

"Much more of a man than a woman. She was very brave, German to her finger-tips, frank, straightforward, kind, benevolent, noble, and well-bred in her manners; minute to the last degree as to what was due to her position. Unsociable, always shut up writing letters, hard, blunt, easily taking aversions—withal capable of loving and inviolable friendship . . . would have made a perfect 'gentleman.'"

She received young Pöllnitz most graciously, and for two reasons. The first, that he was recommended by the Electress, her aunt, to whom she was deeply attached all her life long, though they never met after her marriage. The second, that he was a German—"Mein Landsmann," was always her name for him. Forty years of exile had not cooled her love for her country. "Her honest heart," says Thackeray, "was always with her friends and dear old Deutschland, though her fat little body was confined at Paris, Marly, and Versailles."

"Allemande et peu Française," her brother-in-law said of her, bearing her no grudge for it. She was "greatly pleased at being told I have a German heart and that I love my country. My heart is still German. I cannot

console myself for what has happened in the Palatinate. . . . Germany is always dear to me, and I am little suited to France."

When Pöllnitz was presented she was delighted to see the young fellow's German face, and to hear her native tongue once more. "This Princess," he said, "who had always retained a special liking for Germans, received me with more kindness than she generally showed to those of that nation"—which speaks for Pöllnitz's personal attraction, as well as for his modesty.

"Certainly young Polnitz (*sic*) is in Paris," she wrote, soon after his arrival, to the Duchess of Hanover—

"And he often comes to see me. I have already written to you how well-bred I think him, for all the other young men, when they have answered one, stand there motionless, make one a deep bow, and do not say anything more; but with him it is different. It does one good to talk to him; he talks as much as one likes, and he talks well. I have not yet heard him play the braggart."

Pöllnitz found her "very affable," though "not easily patronizing people." She appointed him her Chamberlain, liked to see him about her daily, welcoming him with a "Guten Morgen, mein Landsmann," inquiring after him if he did not appear, and always speaking German with him. For, as she writes in one of her innumerable letters, written in German, that she was "afraid German, in time, will leave off being a language at all, through being corrupted by foreign idioms . . . a silly habit people here have adopted, as if one could not express everything in German. Your trick of putting French words in your letters shocks me greatly."

When the young Baron entered her service Madame was nearly sixty, and "fat and round as a globe and with a nose of the fashion of a zenith," says Visconti, and had been ten years a widow. "Pas de couvent!"

she had exclaimed vehemently when her husband died, and had stayed on at the French Court, partly because she had no other home to turn to, and partly because she was too poor to move. Times had changed, and life had not gone well with her. She had lived to see Madame de Maintenon all in all to Louis—Madame de Maintenon, who had started as governess to the Duc de Maine, the King's son by the Montespan; Madame de Maintenon, the "old toad," "the old beast," who had been instrumental in arranging the marriage of Maine's sister to the Duke of Orleans, her son. Madame never forgot nor forgave this "eternal shame," and boxed her son's ears before all the Court when he announced his betrothal to her.

As time went on she withdrew more and more into herself and her eternal letter-writing, becoming *blasé* and grumbling, both in speech and in pen. Brought up a Lutheran, compulsorily converted officially to Roman Catholicism as the condition of a splendid marriage, she had passed through every phase of religious thought. In correspondence with Leibnitz she dabbled in free-thinking, glad that he should give her "the great consolation to know that animals do not perish, on account of my dear little dogs." She went officially to mass every Sunday morning, to the play in the evening. Tolerant like her father, she had friends of all persuasions. In her old age she veered back to the faith of her childhood and the Heidelberg Catechism, was delighted to hear a workman, painting the house, singing Marôt's psalms, and, despite the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the Unigenitus "never missed reading my Lutheran Bible every day."

"She loved talking," writes Pöllnitz, "and talked well. Specially did she like speaking her native tongue, which nearly fifty years in France did not make her forget; and which was the reason why she was delighted to see gentlemen of her own nation, and to keep up a correspondence with them."

Letter-writing was now the great occupation and resource of a rather narrowed and embittered life. For years she had written every day of the week to a different Court in Europe—to her aunt, at Hanover, to her daughters, the Duchess of Savoy, the Queen of Spain, and the Duchess of Lorraine; and, after her aunt's death, to her cousin the Raugravine Louisa.

“And it was not little letters that she generally wrote,” remarks her young chamberlain; “she filled quite twenty to thirty sheets of paper. I have seen several which deserved to be made public, and I have never seen anything so well written in German. And, indeed, this Princess did nothing but write from morning to night. First, after her *levée*, which was about ten o'clock, she began her toilette; after that she went into her study, when, after having spent some time at prayers, after a while she sat down to write till it was time for her mass. After mass she wrote till dinner, which did not last long. Madame returned afterwards to write, and went on like that till ten o'clock at night. About nine o'clock one presented oneself in her study. One found the Princess seated at a large table and surrounded by papers; there was a card-table for the household near hers, where her ladies played. From time to time Madame watched the play; sometimes she gave advice as she wrote; at others she conversed with those who were paying their respects to her. I once saw the Princess fall asleep, and, a moment after, wake up with a start and go on writing. This was the ordinary life of Madame when she was at Versailles. Sometimes she accompanied the King out hunting, dressed *en amazone*, or else she went to the opera. This Princess loved plays, and when, after the death of Louis XIV, the Court came to Paris, she often had French or Italian actors on the stage at the Palais Royal. As for rank, no Princess maintained it better than Madame. She was extremely punctilious as to what was due to her,



and on her side gave every one the honours which belonged to them."

Her own description to her cousin, the Raugravine, throws a side-light on Pöllnitz's official life as her Chamberlain, in constant attendance.

"You seem to think," writes Madame, from Fontainebleau, "that I spend my life in amusements and gaieties. To cure you of this idea I will describe my life to you. I rise generally at nine o'clock. Then I say my prayers and read three chapters of the Bible, one of the Old Testament, one of the New, and a psalm. After this I dress and receive those who wish to see me. At eleven I enter my study, where I write or read. At noon I go to chapel, lunching quite alone, for I think nothing can be worse than being by oneself at table watched by a dozen servants, who stare all the time, and, although I have been here forty-three years, I have not yet become used to this country's detestable cooking. After lunch I generally begin writing, and continue till the King's supper; sometimes my ladies come and play a game of cards with me. Madame d'Orléans, the Duchesse de Berri, and sometimes my son, come to see me from nine to ten. At a quarter to eleven we go to table to await the King, who sometimes delays coming till half-past eleven. During supper no one says a word; afterwards we pass into the King's study, where we stay for as long as it would take one to say 'Our Father.' Then the King bows and goes to his apartment, where we follow him; then the King talks to us; at half-past twelve he bids us good-night, and each returns to his or her chamber. I go to bed, the Duchesse begins playing cards, and sometimes they sit playing in her apartments till the next morning. When the theatre is open I go there from seven till supper. The hunts always start at one o'clock. If I go [she now followed in a coach], I get up at eight and go to chapel at eleven."



A short time after his appointment, writes our Baron—

“Madame did me the honour to present me to the King one evening after supper. . . . I will not describe the august head of this illustrious family,” he continues, with bated breath. “A pen more adept than mine would be necessary to treat with suitable dignity such a lofty subject. All I can have the honour of telling you of Louis XIV is that, if the crown of France went to the possessor of a fine presence, this great Prince would have deserved it as much on that score as by that of his birth. He was already advanced in age when I had the honour of seeing him in 1712, and yet he still had more dignity and a more distinguished air than any man in the kingdom.”

The presentation took place in the King's bedchamber. It was next to the old bedchamber of Louis XIII, which Louis had used as his own when the palace was first finished, which was half of what is the *Œil de Bœuf*, and then divided into two.

“The King remembered my name and did me the honour to ask me if I was the son of a Pöllnitz who had been sent to his Court by the Elector of Brandenburg. [France did not recognize the Kingship of Prussia till after the Treaty of Utrecht.] When I told him I was the grandson, he said to me: ‘You did indeed seem too young, for it to be believed that you were his son.’

“His Majesty next asked me if I should stay long in France. I replied that I was delighted to find myself at the feet of the greatest of monarchs, and that I should have the honour of paying my respects to him as long as I possibly could. The King seemed satisfied with my reply, and, turning to Madame, he said to her, speaking of me: ‘He speaks French well.’

“He then did me the honour to bow to me, and

said to me as he retired that it would be a pleasure to him to be of any service to me."

This gracious reception of the newly arrived young Prussian did not pass unnoticed by the courtiers. The next day, in the Great Gallery, Pöllnitz was approached by the Duc de D——, first Gentleman of the Chamber, with every possible politeness. He told him that he should be very pleased with the welcome the King had given him, "and still more with what he had said of me when I had withdrawn, that, of all the foreigners presented to him, none had bowed with better grace, or with less embarrassment, than the Margrave of Anspach and myself."

The day following Madame presented Pöllnitz to the Royal Family, the Duke of Burgundy, the Dauphin and Dauphine, the Duke and the Duchess of Berri, the granddaughter of Madame—

"Who neither said a word to me. But I was very well received by the Duke and Duchess of Orleans. It was difficult to know this Prince without liking him; his affable manners, supported by a brilliant and cultivated mind, attracted all those who had the honour of approaching him. This Prince was very assiduous at Court and also had for Madame, his mother, the most respectful attentions. He never missed a day without paying his respects to this Princess; every evening he went to her at eight o'clock and played chess till the King's supper-time; only during the game did he sit down; as he came in, and as he retired, he always kissed Madame's hand."

But Pöllnitz, in spite of this gracious reception, was somewhat disillusioned. He had reached Paris, indeed, but only in time for the sunset. The Roi Soleil was declining in watery vapours. The disastrous wars had bled the country of men and money. The currency was

depreciated, agriculture not prosperous, trade disordered. Louis was straining every nerve for peace, ready to grant the Allies even more than they eventually took at the peace of Utrecht.

The year before the Dauphin had died of small-pox. The promising Duke of Burgundy, the pupil of good Bishop Fénelon, and his delightful wife, a most attached and worthy young couple, were now Dauphin and Dauphine. The King, a completely reformed character, since his marriage with the widow Maintenon, had given up plays and amusements, and spent most of the time in his wife's apartments, on the same floor as his own, transacting affairs with his Ministers at her fireside, while she did needlework and threw in tactful advice. Louis's conscience was in the keeping of the Jesuit Letellier, his confessor, as both Protestants and Jansenists found to their cost, and religious controversies and retaliations worried his last years.

"The Court of France, though very brilliant from the number of Princes and Princesses of which it is composed, was not so gay as I had imagined," found Pöllnitz. With the throng of other idle courtiers he wandered about the sumptuous palace, admiring the marble-panelled walls, the pictures of old masters, framed in gold and bronze, and interspersed with splendid mirrors; but since the disasters of war and the famine of the winter of 1709, marble and gilt tables and chandeliers had replaced those in solid silver, which had been sent to the Mint.

Most of all was Pöllnitz impressed with the Royal Chapel, which was where the Salon d'Ercule and the room beneath it now are.

"Nothing can be finer or in better taste. The principal picture represents God the Father in all his glory, as perfectly as the weakness of man may conceive it. I never grew tired of admiring this piece of painting, and I always looked at it again with renewed pleasure."



LOUIS LE GRAND.

From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.





The King sat in a box facing the altar, and high above it the organ, the orchestra, and the choir. Directly the King entered with his cardinals and nobles in fine procession, the splendid band struck up. The Body Guard and a hundred of the Swiss Guard, in the gallery and the body of the chapel, played drums and fifes till His Majesty was seated. When the Princes and Princesses came, which was unusual, they all knelt on the same bench, but not near the King. The courtiers in the chapel below turned their backs on the altar and faced the King. (!) "The King appeared to pray to God, and the Court to pray to the King." (!) When the King communicated the chapel was spread with four carpets up to the altar, and the Swiss Guard ranged in two files behind him and the courtiers surrounded him. At sermon-time, when Bossuet, Massillon, and Bourdaloue alternately thundered at or flattered him from the pulpit, the King sat in an arm-chair facing it, and the royal Princes on either side on camp-stools.

Pöllnitz thought the gardens of Versailles one of the marvels of the age. "I do not think that the vaunted gardens of Semiramis could be as fine." He wandered about among the fountains, strolled in the bosky Trianons, and stared at the wild beasts in the menagerie.

Life at the Court of Versailles during the last years of the Grand Monarque—

"Was the most regular in the world. The hours of the King were drawn up by rule, and, having seen one of his days, you have seen them for a year," writes Pöllnitz. "The King rose at nine or ten o'clock; the Princes and all the courtiers were present at his *levée*. When he was dressed he prayed on his knees on a square of black velvet; he was surrounded by his chaplains and the Bishops who were at his *levée*, and who also knelt. When prayers were finished the King passed into his study; sometimes the Ministers came to talk business with him. While waiting, the courtiers walked in the Grande Galerie. The King passed through to mass; it was

then that all the courtiers pressed forward to be noticed by the King. I never saw any nation more eager to pay their respects than the French. I have seen several courtiers, who thought that they had escaped the Prince's eye, go on ahead into another hall, and so on, till they had been lucky enough to be noticed.

"After mass the King went back to his study. Sometimes he held a council; then he dined alone. Again, during dinner one could notice the eagerness of the courtiers to be seen by him. The King had a good appetite, and it seemed to me that he ate enormously. His dinner lasted three quarters of an hour. Some days he had music. After dinner the King went down by a little staircase, and got into his coach to go and hunt in the park of Versailles, which was full of small game. He came back in the dusk, and went to Madame de Maintenon's room, where only a few people of the old Court were present. Usually it was only women, like Madame de Caylus, a relation of Madame de Maintenon, or Marquise de Dangeau, who played at *berlan* with the King, when the Ministers were not there; in that case, instead of playing they talked affairs, and frequently it was then that everything was settled.

"At ten at night it was announced that His Majesty was served; the King went to table. The Princes and Princesses never failed to be present. The Duchesses were placed behind the Princes' camp-stools, on either side of the table; the other women of quality stood behind on the right of the King's arm-chair. His Majesty saluted first the Princes and Princesses and all the ladies, and then seated himself in his arm-chair. Then the Princes and Princesses sat down, and the Duchesses. The ladies who were not entitled to do so passed into an adjoining salon, where they were permitted to seat themselves. The supper lasted no longer than the dinner; the King talked little; sometimes he made a remark to Madame, or the Duchesse d'Orléans. I have never seen him talk to the Ducs de Berri or Orléans, nor with the Duchesse de Berri.

“After supper the King, preceded by the Princes, passed into his bedchamber, where he found the ladies who were not Duchesses : he bowed to them, and then placed himself on the side of the balustrade which was before his bed, where he stayed till the Princesses and Duchesses had entered the room. I noticed that the ladies of the old Court made a deep curtsy to the King’s bed on entering the room, which the young ladies did not do ; apparently more proud of their youth and of their charms, they thought themselves absolved from so much respect.

“The Duchesses who had been present at supper having entered the room, the King bowed to them, and also to the other ladies ; then, preceded by the Princes and followed by the Princesses who had supped with the King, he passed into his study, where the Princes and Princesses of the Blood were also present. His Majesty conversed with them some time ; during that time the Duchesses and the other ladies withdrew. At last the King dismissed the Princes and Princesses and went to bed.”



## CHAPTER IV

A VERY monotonous and boring routine this, which he has described, for a young fellow of twenty, eager to amuse himself ! Pöllnitz found himself dancing attendance on an aged bigot and his elderly sister-in-law. Escaping from the Scylla of the Berlin Schloss, he was menaced by the Charybdis of Versailles. We have seen how bitterly disillusioned he felt over the Court of Louis. But there were alleviations—the swing of the pendulum, the *revers de la médaille*. Can we wonder that he seized upon them with an avidity that brought about a life-long existence of impecuniosity ?

“ When the King went to bed the courtiers then divided. Some went to the *coucher* of the Duc de Berri, others to that of the Duc d’Orléans. Those who were paying court to that Prince were very well received there ; as for myself, I went as often as I possibly could, not so much to make my court to Madame, as because of a real liking I had for this Prince.

“ Thus the King passed his life. The courtiers, on their part, had no very lively pleasures ; gambling was almost their only occupation. One generally gathered at the Prince Armagnac de Lorraine’s, the Grand Equerry, where we played in the afternoon. Foreigners were also excellently received by him, as well as by the Cardinal de Rohan. This latter lived in great magnificence. One met the most distinguished men in France at these two noblemen’s.”

As is so often the case in the lull after a great war, which has lasted long, a mania for gambling had seized

the upper classes in France and the nations which imitated them. It was the same during the Regency in England after the stress of the Napoleonic campaigns, and, quite recently, we have witnessed the same here again.

The vacuous, idle life, devoid of serious occupation or interest, without healthy outdoor pursuits—the royal “hunts” hardly counted—to which the courtiers at Versailles were condemned, was an excellent forcing-ground for the vice. We must recollect, however, that the eighteenth century did not consider gambling as such; it regarded it as a pastime, *faute de mieux*.

Louis himself, in his youth, had never played much, or for large stakes; but he had liked the excitement of watching high play. Now, in his old age, while he was himself content with *berlan* or *trictrac* in the Maintenons' room, his Court was a veritable gambling-hell. As, in the very centre of the raging cyclone which is dealing disaster to every ship within its circle, there is one small spot of complete calm, so round the aged Louis, the perfect gentleman in manners and dignity, whom passion, bereavement, disaster, had apparently left unmoved, there surged a very whirlpool of gambling, vice, intrigue, fanaticism, and persecution.

The Abbé Primi Visconti has left us a sketch of the aristocratic gambling-table of the period. Hoca, lansquenet, *hombre*, were out of fashion among the games of chance, and *bassette* was the rage.

“This game collected such a strange assembly that it was painted even on fans. One saw the Comtesse de Soissons in a great arm-chair with a number of little dogs round her. Madame de Vertanon was cutting the cards, Madame de Ramburses was tearing some of them. The Marquis de Gordes was looking on, an eyeglass in his hand. The Duc de Vendôme was taking snuff; the Comte de Grammont was tearing his wig, the Chevalier de Vendôme was beating the table with his fists, the Duc de Créquy was turning up his sleeves, the Comte de

Roye was kicking his feet, the Marquis de Seignelay was swearing, and all were making gestures according to the grief or dissatisfaction which fate was dealing them out."

He tells us that the Marquis de Beaumont lost ten thousand pistoles without saying a word. The Duchess of Cleveland staked two million francs in playing with the Chevalier Châtillon. Primi himself once put on one pistole and won three hundred in two hours. "The Comtesse de Soissons followed his luck, and the Duchesse de Bouillon and others won large sums, so that the Ambassador Giustiniani, who was cutting, lost six thousand pistoles in a few minutes."

There was a great mixture at the card-table.

"It had been in vogue for a long time in France," writes Pöllnitz. "I remember hearing Madame say that, her husband being at S. Cloud for a few days, she went to see him from Versailles. She found him playing lansquenet with twenty-two players; she only knew two of them. When the game was over she asked Monsieur if he knew with whom he had been playing. 'They are quite well-mannered people,' replied the Prince, 'good merchants of Paris who play high and boldly.' Madame added to this that she had not then been long in France, and she had been so shocked to find Monsieur, her husband, in such company that she could not help blaming him. But the Prince only laughed, saying: 'That is a remains of your German pride, and in time you will get over it.'"

Madame herself, Pöllnitz soon found, was always unlucky at cards, and "did not like follies." She tells a correspondent that—

"Here fabulous sums are staked, and the players are like raving maniacs. They howl; one strikes the table with his fist so hard that the whole room resounds with

the blow ; a third blasphemes so as to make one's hair stand on end ; all are beside themselves, and frightful to behold."

Into the midst of this Bedlam burst a bomb-shell. Great hopes had been built on the Duke of Burgundy, now Dauphin. Carefully educated by the saintly Fénelon, he "was of exemplary life and serious purpose." "He knew," writes Pöllnitz, "how to unite the calm of the cloister with the bustle of the Court, and, always assiduous in the great business of his salvation, he yet considered, and with reason, that the study of the affairs of State should enter into his religious exercises." His bride had come to him over the Alps sixteen years before, daughter of the Duke of Savoy. Charming, dainty, lovely, she instantly won the heart of her grandfather-in-law, and kept it through times of stress and trouble when he and her father were at war. For her he collected the menagerie at Versailles, with her he became a child again, watching Madame and the ladies play with her at blind-man's buff. Maintenon educated her, taking her to classes at S. Cyr. At twelve she had a grand wedding ; the Duke was fifteen. The young couple were happy and attached. The life and soul of the royal circle, a gleam of sunshine in Louis's sad old age, she passed unscathed through the fiery ordeal of court life, and, when war came, bore herself "with the dignity of the first lady in the land, the feelings of a Roman woman for Rome, and the agitation of a soul which desires good with an ardour beyond her age."

"From time to time history shows us seductive personalities who draw the reader into love with them. Often Providence removes them from the world adorned by the charms that time effaces, and hopes that it would have realized. The Duchess of Burgundy was one of these gracious apparitions.

"An astrologer had foretold her that she should die at twenty-seven. She often spoke of it to her



husband, asking him if he would remarry: 'I hope God will not punish me enough to see you die,' he replied; 'but if this calamity does happen to me, I shall never remarry, for in eight days I shall follow you to the grave.'"

However, the young Duchess seemed very well and gay. But, doubtless, Versailles, overcrowded and ill-ventilated, was no very healthy habitation, even in those drain-less days. Suddenly she sickened of what was termed a malignant fever, and died after a few days' illness, "almost in the arms of the Duchess of Orleans, whom she had asked to stay with her."

"The King felt this death keenly," writes Pöllnitz. Saint-Simon says this sorrow "was the only one which really touched him in his life." He moved instantly to Marly, "where Louis XIV liked to be," and, in the most beautiful of all the royal gardens and grounds, to lay aside much of pomp and ceremony.

With him went the bereaved young husband, staggering under the blow he had received. Scarcely had he reached Marly when he too fell ill, and of the same disease.

"He received his sentence of death," says Pöllnitz, "with a truly Christian courage, and in the height of his fever was often heard to ejaculate: 'My God! save the King and the State.'"

"The evening before his death he had a great desire to hear mass; it was very difficult to make him understand that the rules of the Church do not permit of mass being said at that hour. As he continued to ask for it, directly midnight had struck, it was said in his room at an altar placed at the foot of his bed. Monsieur le Duc was very calm, he did not cease praying to God till his strength gave way more and more, and he died"—just six days after his wife!

"I am so staggered that I cannot get over it," hastily scribbled Madame, the same day, "and I hardly know

what I am saying. You, who are kind, will surely pity us, for the sadness which reigns here cannot be described."

"The King," writes Pöllnitz, "needed all his courage to bear so many sorrows, blow upon blow. The Royal Family were in the utmost consternation. They tried to persuade the King to go away for a time for change of air; but he replied with courage that he was in the hand of God, and so he would stay where he was."

On February 22nd the bodies of husband and wife were borne from Versailles to S. Denis on the same car. Never did Pöllnitz "see a sadder sight."

Worse was to follow. The Dauphin had left two sons, the eldest known as the Duke of Brittany. For three weeks was he Dauphin, and then the same fell disease carried him off also. The hopes of France now rested upon one delicate baby!

"This time of desolation," wrote Voltaire years afterwards, "made on all sides such a deep impression that, during the long minority of Louis XV, I have seen many people who wept in speaking of these losses."

It was in keeping with the age that rumours of poisoning ran riot over the stricken land. Fingers were pointed at Madame's son, the Duke of Orleans, between whom and the throne now stood only the childless Duke of Berri and one fragile little life.

Philip, the King his uncle had said of him, was "a braggadocio of vice," a drunken, profligate infidel, dabbling, after the fashion of his day, in chemistry and black magic. On the day of the funeral he was hooted in the streets with cries of "See the murderer!" "He was shunned in the royal apartments, and, if he approached a group of courtiers, one after another slipped away, till he found himself alone." But he was not cast in the mould of a Richard III—weaker, un-

ambitious—and posterity has failed to find an iota of evidence against him.

The disease was epidemic both in Paris and the provinces. In the city Voltaire says it carried off five hundred people in a month, of all classes.

The Duke was overwhelmed with the calumny, and so was his mother. He even went so far as to obtain a *lettre de cachet* from the King ordering him to the Bastille to await a formal trial; but Madame persuaded Louis to withdraw it. “On the face of the accusation,” says Voltaire, “was the stupid idea that any one could make away with all these lives, and yet let the one survive who could avenge them.”

Following upon this series of sudden and unexpected deaths came dire news from Berlin to Pöllnitz. For some time his King had been in failing health, and the Queen, victim of religious mania, in an even worse condition. Pöllnitz describes how, in one of her fits of insanity, she rushed, dishevelled and half-dressed, by a secret staircase into the King’s apartment. Bursting through a closed glass door, she threw herself, bleeding, upon the poor old invalid, dozing in his chair. He woke up with a start, thinking he saw the “White Lady”—

“A phantom clothed in white which, an old tradition tells, appears in the palaces of the House of Brandenburg shortly before the death of a member of that family. This dire story is believed also in the margravates of Brandenburg, Baireuth, and Brandenburg-Anspach. It relates that Joachim I, wishing to enlarge his castle at Berlin, forced an old woman to sell him her house. She did not wish to leave it, and, out of spite, threatened to be a bird of ill-omen to Joachim and his descendants.”

Frederic took to his bed, never to leave it, and died soon afterwards.

Pöllnitz felt his death, for his King had been a good friend to him.

“He loved and protected the sciences and arts,” he writes, “but, the great qualities of his mind, the love he bore to his people, and the consideration he had for the nobility, will make him live for ever in the hearts of those of his subjects who know what gratitude demands.”



## CHAPTER V

THE French Court was in deepest mourning, "all joys, pleasures, amusements over, and every kind of charm eclipsed," wails Saint-Simon. But, with the first approach of spring, it moved to lovely Fontainebleau. The truce with the English and Dutch, the victory of Denain, and the certainty that peace was in the air, revived every one's spirits.

"Not so magnificent as Versailles," Pöllnitz yet thought Fontainebleau had "the air of a château, which Versailles lacked. Moreover, Nature and Art seem to have worked in concert to plan the splendid buildings which many kings have erected at Fontainebleau, whereas, at Versailles, it seems as if Nature had not entered into the scheme, all is artificial and too elaborate. . . . In the town most of the nobility have mansions where they put their servants and carriages, for the custom of the Court of France is that every nobleman attached to it must be lodged in the King's palace, and the French are so infatuated with this custom that a nobleman would prefer to be quartered in a rat-hole in the palace than to be comfortable in a fine apartment in his mansion at Versailles and Fontainebleau."

"No public calamities," writes Pöllnitz, "affected the gambling." The younger members of the Royal Family and the Court plunged yet deeper into play, which took place at the Duchesse de Berri's and the Duke d'Antin's, and of which he tells a characteristic story.

"The game was twelve players at lansquenet, who

started with four louis and finished with rouleaus of a hundred louis-d'or. One evening I won, in less than an hour, the possession of seven hundred louis; moreover, Madame la Duchesse de la Ferté rooked me of a good hundred, besides eighty which she borrowed from me, and which she never has repaid me. Perhaps she thought herself obliged to recoup herself for the trouble she had kindly taken in putting my money on the table, as the great number of ladies prevented me approaching it."

The Duc d'Orléans' notorious daughter, plunging, says her grandmother, "into every imaginable folly," was one of the most inveterate gamblers.

"I have seen," writes Nemeizt, another German traveller staying in Paris, "in the apartment of Madame la Duchesse de Berri, all the Princes and Princesses of royal blood, with other illustrious courtiers, sitting at a great round table, playing for pistoles, while the Duchesse herself, nearing her time, has laid herself on a state bed, in front of which was a table of *hombre*, many people of middle-class standing behind the aforementioned great personages to throw louis-d'or in their turn on the table."

No wonder that Madame wrote of "the existing state of things. Young men are frightfully vicious, and do not deprive themselves of the pleasure of lying and cheating; they think that to be a man of honour is a ridiculous thing." She should have included the women.

Madame took a motherly interest in her young *landsmann*. She was evidently perturbed by his gambling, and feared he was going to the bad. The change of rulers in Prussia probably suggested to her the idea that Pöllnitz would be better at home than in Paris, for she wrote to the Duchess of Hanover about him soon after King Frederic's death.

“Herr von Polnitz (*sic*) has not yet taken service here. I doubt if it can be done. He would much have liked to borrow money of me and of my people, but I refused to allow him to do either. I, myself, have none just at present, and if I were to order my people to advance him some I should have to go bail for him, and God knows whereto that would lead me, for one cannot trust a gambler. He declines to change his religion, but wishes to join a regiment which is quite full of Lutherans and reformed. It seemed to me odd that he is trying to take service just at the time when there is talk of peace. I told him as much; but he says he has fallen into such disgrace with the Prince Royal that he cannot think of staying at the Court of Berlin.”

The Duc de —, First Gentleman of the Chamber, who, on the day after Pöllnitz's presentation to Louis, had told him of the favourable impression he had made upon the King, “showed me attentions I shall never forget.” He had suggested that the Baron should enter the French army, and even promised to obtain a colonelcy for him if he would become a Roman Catholic. Pöllnitz's comments are interesting when read by the light of his subsequent conduct. It was frivolity, not faith, which, at this moment, determined his refusal to accept the condition.

“While thanking him for his kind offers, I assured him that interest would not make me change my religion. I was still full of the prejudices of the Protestants against the Catholics; moreover, I was then of an age when serious reflections do not appeal to one. Pleasure occupied me entirely, and, indeed, it was not difficult to give oneself up to amusement; all the kingdom, especially Paris, breathed an air of gaiety which was irresistible.”

Peace, the longed-for, was on the point of ratification; to the volatile French mind Denain seemed to avenge

Blenheim. France and England exchanged envoys to arrange terms. The Duc d'Aumont, though well received, writes Pöllnitz, by the court party in London, was insulted by the Opposition and the populace, who would not hear mention of peace. The Duke's hotel was set on fire, "and he lost a great deal, for the Duke, to make a fine show, had borrowed furniture from several people, and the Duke of Orleans lost a fine tapestry and several rare pictures."

Foreign visitors enlivened Fontainebleau, the Elector of Bavaria, brother of the first Dauphine; and the English envoy, St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, was made much of by the King in a very pronounced manner.

"I was one day," writes Pöllnitz, "at His Majesty's dinner, when there was to be music. Directly it began the King stopped it saying, aloud: 'I hear M. St. John dines with the Duc d'Antin; let my band go and play there, and say that I send it, and hope they will enjoy it.' You may judge how the courtiers, in imitation of the King, vied with each other in welcoming the English Minister, who, moreover, on his part, well deserved the attention paid him.

"All this time no one did anything but enjoy themselves. Amusements succeeded each other. The hunts were particularly fine. The ladies in the suites of the Duchesse de Berri or Madame, on horseback, or in carriages. So many pretty women on horseback, all splendidly dressed, the King in a light chaise, surrounded by mounted courtiers, the turn-out of the hunt—all this made a great show in the fine forest of Fontainebleau.

"On days when there was no hunting the King drove in an open chaise along the grand canal, the ladies following. In the evening there was a comedy, or a reception, at the Duchesse de Berri's, where lansquenets was played. On non-hunting days one met at several noblemen's. I noticed that most of the lords were more inclined to be civil to one at Fontainebleau than at



Versailles ; if one was known as a man of birth, one easily procured the loan of the King's horses for hunting, which is never done except in France and Lorraine, though I have sometimes seen the same thing done at the court of Bavaria, but rarely."

But, after a while, however, attendance at Court began to pall upon Pöllnitz. He seems to have had no salary from Madame, though dependent on her protection and favour. The old lady was becoming more of "a hermit," as she said of herself, and her giddy young countryman went off to have a fling in the wider dissipation of Paris itself. But almost directly he had settled himself there, he fell so ill as to be "within an inch of the grave." However, Helvetius, the celebrated Dutch doctor, father of the famous philosopher, brought him round. When he was well enough to go out, Pöllnitz was ordered air and exercise in the gardens of the Luxembourg Palace, the best open space among the narrow streets of old Paris within easy reach. At first the air really did him good, "but soon it became very pernicious to me."

For, one day, as he sat on the terrace, he saw afar off two ladies of very distinguished, grand carriage, and mien, and most attractive in their *déshabillé*—the short, hooped skirts, and half-concealing hoods over unpowdered hair—of the period.

"They came towards the Terrace where I was walking. I sat down on a bench to see them pass by. I confess that they seemed to me as pleasant as their *déshabillé* was grand and gay. When they passed me by, one of them, perhaps by chance, let her handkerchief drop ; I picked it up at once and presented it to her. She received it with much politeness. I paid her a compliment to which she replied with wit. Gradually we fell into conversation, which in truth only lasted a quarter of an hour, but which, nevertheless, cost me dear ; I fell in love, and more in love than I can express. These Ladies asked me my name. You can imagine I did not



THE CHÂTEAU OF VERSAILLES.  
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.



require telling twice to give it, all the more as I hoped that they, in return, would be kind enough to tell me theirs. But, however much I pressed them about it they would not ever satisfy me. The one who had at first struck me most told me, in very good German, not to trouble to find out who they were, as I should not fail to see them again if only I remained in Paris. She told me that as she was leaving. I gave her my hand to escort her to her coach, which seemed to me very well turned out. I also saw two tall, well-dressed Footmen. All this confirmed me in the surmise that they were either Ladies of Quality, or, at least, courtesans expensively provided for.

“I would have given everything in the world to be told exactly which it was ; but it was quite impossible to find out anything. The Valet I had with me was a German, even more of a foreigner than myself, and, moreover, very unfitted to manage such discoveries. I therefore remained in a deadly disquietude which was like to bring back the inflammation of the brain I had had during the illness from which I was recovering. Every day I did not miss going back to the Luxembourg, and I stayed there from nine in the morning till evening, except for a moment when I went home to dine. All these goings and comings lasted for about a fortnight, at the end of which I found myself no more advanced than at first. At last, when I was in despair at not discovering my Fair One, I was very surprised to see her in a place where I little dreamt of meeting her.

“One day I accompanied Mesdames de V—— and D—— to the theatre, where the *Cid* was to be played. The elder Quinault came on as ‘Rodrigue.’ Imagine my surprise when I saw the Object of my passion also in the Piece, in which she was playing the part of ‘Chimène.’ In all my life I had never felt so embarrassed. I did not know if I ought to pursue such a love-affair. I felt some repugnance at being fond of a person whom I saw in a profession which is usually not compatible with the feelings of delicacy which well-



bred men always seek in love. The decision I came to was truly that of a young fellow of nineteen ; that is to say, I did exactly the opposite of what I ought to have done. I abandoned myself madly to my passion ; hardly could I bear to wait for the interval between the long and the short Play, to go to the *Foyer*.

“There I found my Fair One surrounded by several men of my acquaintance, whom at first I took for as many rivals ; so that, not satisfied with being in love, I also became jealous. I spoke to the D—— (that was the actress’s name) ; but I saw my conversation made her ill at ease, and I noticed that she had to consider a gentleman of the long robe who was beside her. I was not mistaken ; it was B——, a Parliamentary Lawyer, who contributed to the Lady’s expenses, and who acted more as a Financier than as a Magistrate. I was conceited enough to determine to oust this Lover, or, at least, I hoped to give him some points. In order to succeed in doing this I began to frequent the Theatre very assiduously, and I soon had the consolation of not sighing in vain.

“The difficulty was to meet ; but love and luck soon provided the means. Young G——, the Sister of the D——, and who lived with her, fell ill of small-pox ; the Lawyer, who was very afraid of it, instantly removed the D——, and gave her apartments at the Hôtel d’Enragues. The Actress informed me of her new abode, and the same day I took a room in the same Hotel, taking with me only one Servant, the Confidant of my little secrets. There, despite the inconvenient Argus, I was easily able to see his Mistress.”

The ancient rivalry between the *noblesse de l’épée* and the *noblesse de la robe*, added piquancy to the intrigue, and the D—— was fair game. But a few years later was not poor Adrienne Lecouvreur, the star of the Paris stage, the beloved of Marshal Saxe, of Voltaire, denied upon her death-bed “benefit of clergy,” and, a social outcast, buried like a dog ?

“But the Lawyer became suspicious, and began investigations, and very soon discovered enough to satisfy his curiosity. . . . It is easy to imagine the fury of this outraged Lover. Like another Roland, he wreaked his vengeance for the unfaithfulness of his Angélique on whatever was to hand; he broke, he smashed everything, he even tore off his Fair One’s wig and vowed to exterminate every one. The young Lady only met all this noise by tears, which at last were efficacious in soothing this enraged Lover. Becoming calmer, he mingled bitter reproaches with tender sentiments; he even played upon her weak point, and offered increased munificence in return for a promise of inviolable fidelity. The Fair Frail swore that henceforth nothing should make her swerve from the path of duty, and, bursting into tears, consented to receive two thousand crowns more, so that her gains came to twenty thousand livres. With much joy on either side, this treaty was ratified; but yet it was not carried out in all its rigour. I continued to see the young Lady, till, at last, her sister having recovered from her illness, she returned to her own house. The difficulties I met with there satiated me quite as much as my own fickleness. I had but little trouble in curing myself of a passion which was not founded upon respect; perhaps even, but for the pleasure of enraging the Limb of the Law, I should have retired sooner.

“The love-affair I had had with the actress had not prevented my going much into society, and I may venture to say that I shone with some success in a land where all that is not French is easily considered barbaric.”

In succession to St. John, the Duke of Shrewsbury, a favourite and distinguished statesman under Anne and George I, was sent as English envoy to Paris. But he did not spend much money, or make a great show in any way, for he was blind with one eye and unimposing. “But for the Order of the Garter he wore,” Pöllnitz

would hardly have taken him for a nobleman. His wife was an Italian, Adelhida, sister of the Marquis Pagliotti, "celebrated for his extravagances and his tragic end in England," and she cut the oddest figure at Court.

After being presented to the King, "she came on to see Madame, where she found a large company assembled out of curiosity to see her. It was there that I had the honour of meeting her. At first she seemed as embarrassed as if she had never lived in a Court, but gradually she grew more lively, talked well, and with wit.

"That same evening Madame Shrewsbury was present at the King's supper; she was placed in the row of Duchesses immediately behind the Duc de Berri. She talked a great deal to this Prince, though she had only seen him for a moment at the Duchesse, his wife's. Nevertheless, all supper-time, she kept pulling him by the sleeve to warn him not to eat too much. Every one was amused at this familiarity, and I noticed that M. le Duc de Berri was not a little embarrassed by it.

"On the other hand, the King treated her with a politeness which verged on scrupulosity. He had come to table and passed her without seeing her. As he was sitting down M. de Livry, the first *maître d'hôtel*, informed him that Madame l'Ambassadrice d'Angleterre was present at his supper. The King instantly returned to the place where she was, and said that he had passed her without bowing to her because he had not noticed her, and that he thought she would have been tired with all the visits she had paid that day and would have retired. The King begged her to go and rest, but she excused herself, saying no one was ever tired when they were able to pay their respects to such a great King as His Majesty."

One day Pöllnitz was at the Hôtel de Soissons, where the Duke and Duchess of Shrewsbury were staying. A pleasure-loving Duchess was using every means to

persuade the ambassadress to give a ball. "For Lady Shrewsbury had that in common with her husband, she did not like expense." In vain the Duchess discoursed on sorrows and bereavements, on the anxiety of years of war, in France, and said that every one hoped that the ambassadress who brought peace would also bring about the return of amusements to dispel sadness. Lady Shrewsbury only replied that she quite hoped that people in Paris would amuse themselves, but that it appeared to her that the happy tidings Lord Shrewsbury brought were quite enough to remove the gloom of past misfortunes without it being asked of him to arrange other amusements. "So there was no hope of a ball from that quarter."

The reader will, no doubt, "be surprised to hear who it was, instead of the English ambassador, who gave the first ball. It was I who awoke Paris out of the lethargy into which it seemed to have fallen. I gave a dance at the Carneaux, or, rather, Mesdames de la M—— D——, and de V—— gave it for me. These Ladies had asked me for a dance most politely. At first I had begged to be excused, as a Foreigner, in that it was not for me to set fêtes going, especially upon the occasion of a Peace which could be of no advantage to me. Besides which, other reasons, somewhat to the taste of Madame de Shrewsbury, prevented me consenting to the expense of a Ball which I foresaw would cost me a great deal. These reasons were listened to readily enough, but yet, as those Ladies absolutely intended to have a ball, they suggested to me to give them only ten louis [under £10], assuring me that with that sum the ball could be given, without my having anything more to do except tell people at the Opera and the Theatre that there would be a dance at Carneaux on such a day. This I did not fail to do, and I found people everywhere ready to come to this assembly. On their part, the ladies hired the great hall at the Carneaux, which they had splendidly lighted up; they sent a fairly good



band, and had the Ball opened by their Waiting-women and Valets.

“That evening I supped with the Ladies, to whom I confessed, ingenuously enough, that I did not know what sort of a sum such a Ball would cost in Paris. After having joked about it for a long time, we had ourselves carried thither in our chairs after supper, and never in my life have I seen so many Masqueraders. We were carried from the door of the Courtyard right into the Hall, which was hot enough to kill one, and it was impossible to know to whom to apply for a drop of water. Every one was swearing at the Ball, and at him who had given it. Happily no one knew who bore the burden of such a Fête. However, I had taken the precaution of having some refreshments brought for the Ladies I was escorting, and they were not unneeded. This Ball whetted my appetite for giving another ten or twelve of this kind of Entertainment, also devoid of refreshments. Yet, in spite of the thirst which the company suffered, and of the imprecations I overheard against the Donor, there was always an innumerable crowd of Masqueraders.

“ . . . Thus I spent my time in Paris. I frequented the best society and the *beau monde*; I played with some luck, which enabled me, with what I received from home, to live in princely fashion. Every day I made new acquaintances, who gave me fresh amusements.”

Though the sad news he had heard of the death of his sovereign, and of the complete change in the régime of the Prussian Court, showed Pöllnitz, to his sorrow, that there was nothing more to be hoped for in his own country, his grief, though sincere, did not last long.

“I had not, indeed, a brilliant career to look forward to, but my extreme youth made me sanguine enough to believe that I could not but get on. My birth and my position also reassured me, and, moreover, to be quite frank about the situation in which I found myself, I

was in love, and at Paris, a reason specious enough to dispel any prolonged melancholy.

“It was at the fair at S. Germain's that I contracted this new *amourette*. I had no reason to blush over my choice, and might flatter myself to have found everything that could satisfy a gallant. I abandoned myself entirely to my new passion, and, as I was naturally inclined to be extravagant, I spent so lavishly that my friends were frightened. Carriages, clothes, liveries, all were of the utmost splendour; the presents I gave frequently were very handsome. Very soon I found myself obliged to consider seriously how I was going on. I had only myself to blame, for Mademoiselle de S—— (this was the name of my adored one) would certainly have been content with a less extravagant lover, so that, with a little economy, I could have cut a fairly fine figure in Paris. But my new passion prevented me from looking closely into my affairs. They got into such a bad state that I found myself obliged to consider a journey home. Very hard did I find it to fix the date of a departure which I could not contemplate without sorrow. My dear mistress and her mother, on the other hand, both melting into tears, urged me to set about this most imperative journey. The one wished it for my good, the other for her daughter's sake; for this good mother was as eager about the money as her daughter was disinterested.”

At last the sad day came. Pöllnitz left without any farewells except to Madame and the Duke of Orleans. As he expected to be absent for so short a time, he left all his people behind and took with him only one servant, who knew all about his affairs.

At five in the same evening he reached Roye, in Picardy, and was delayed there waiting for post-horses, for the Spanish ambassador, going to the congress at Utrecht, had taken them all. Therefore he decided to drive on with those he had, and stopped at a wretched inn between Roye and Péronne. His aching head was

so full of agitating thoughts and worries and conflicting emotions, that he did the best thing in the circumstances, and went straight to bed.

But in bed it was worse, for he gave himself up to his sorrow. One moment he longed to go back to Paris, where love called. The next he felt the sad necessity of proceeding on his journey. A thousand different thoughts succeeded each other.

“At last, after long debate, I decided to return to Paris. It was two hours after midnight when I came to this mad resolve. I rose at once, and called my valet; but, as he was in a separate building to me, I thought that, instead of losing time calling for him, I had better go and wake him myself. So I left my room. Unfortunately for me, I had not noticed, or, rather, in my agitation I did not remember, that the door of my room opened on to a gallery which ran round the house. This balcony was in course of construction, and there had not been time to put up a balustrade, so that, before I had gone two paces, I turned as good a somersault as I have ever turned in my life.

“I fell into the courtyard, but, by good luck, lighted upon a dung-hill, which saved me from being hurt, or perhaps killed. I had no further harm than the shock and the finding myself on as disgusting a mattress as one can imagine.

“My worst difficulty was then how to get out of where I was and back into my room. The night was so dark, and I knew so little of the house, that I had no hope of extricating myself alone. So I began to call my valet with all my might. The rascal took care not to hear me. A little later I was made aware that he had got drunk, and was sleeping off his wine in a deep slumber. Finding that I had to do with a deaf man, I betook myself to calling over, in a loud shout, the names of Marie, Catherine, Jeanne, and others, hoping that there was some servant-maid in the house whom this name would suit.

“I was right. One came to my rescue, but the girl, taking me for a ghost, gave a scream of ‘Jésu-Marie!’ and disappeared instantly.

“I was in a great dilemma; from the way things were going I foresaw that I should have to pass the rest of my night on my dung-hill, waiting patiently till the house woke up. I dreaded this misadventure all the more because, though it was summer-time, the nights were cold, and I had nothing on but a silk dressing-gown.

“So I began to shout and to swear again, so much so that, at last, some of the household came running to see what was happening, but each one, following the example of the maid-servant, thought I was a ghost and dared not come near me.

“All this noise at last awoke my valet, who came running in his shirt. At first he thought that I was being murdered, but when I told him to have the horses put to my chaise, he concluded that I had gone off my head. I reiterated the order to him to have the chaise got ready that I might leave at once. My valet, who could not get over the amazement an order of this sort caused him, said to me:

“‘Ha! Monsieur, be easy; it is now only two in the morning. At five you shall start.’

“As he was one of those valets who readily grow familiar with masters who treat them kindly, he flatly refused to obey me; he replied that I did not mean it, and that, because I could not sleep, I wanted to prevent others doing so; that in the daytime I was dragged along in a good chaise, and he, most of the time, on very bad horses; that the long and short of it was, that he wanted to go to bed, and that he would not start until he had had another two hours’ sleep and a good breakfast.

“I was minded to get angry, but, seeing that that would have no effect, we compromised our own difference of opinion; he gave way to me in that he should not go to bed again, and I allowed him to have some break-



fast. When he thought fit to have finished, I got into my chaise and ordered the postillion to take the Paris road.

“Then it was that my valet thought that I had quite taken leave of my senses ; he told me that I was making a mistake, and that it was the road to the Low Countries that we were to take. I told him to hold his tongue and to start. The poor fellow, even more sure than ever that I had gone mad, became very anxious indeed ; at each change of horses he came to the window of my chaise with a sorrowful look on his face, and asked me how I did, and if I required anything.

“At last I reached Paris. All those who had known that I was leaving were very astonished at seeing me back again. I made believe that I had felt very unwell, and had returned for fear of falling ill, preferring to be ill in Paris to anywhere else. No one would believe me ; they thought *affaires de cœur* were the only cause of my precipitate return.

“I stayed three months in Paris, and all that time I did not go to Versailles. I was afraid of Madame, who ‘did not like follies’ ; on my part I did not like lectures, so that I thought it wiser to keep away.

“However, the same reasons which determined me to go home the first time still held good, and I at last left Paris again, having made up my mind, however, to be away as short a time as I possibly could.”

## CHAPTER VI

PÖLLNITZ went by way of Brussels to Breda, one of the most important fortresses in the Dutch Brabant, and thence, crossing the Waal at Gorkum, to Utrecht—

“A city with a very ancient look. I fancy the walls of Jericho, which fell at the sound of the redoubtable trumpets of Israel, resembled those of this town. . . . A pleasant place, well built, with cheerful streets, and better air than elsewhere in Holland, as it is less relaxing.” After The Hague Utrecht, “the best residence for a gentleman ; many nobility and rich private people.”

Peace had been signed, but the Congress was still sitting. Puns, he found, were going round about the three treaties of peace which had recently been concluded in the United Provinces. Nijmegen, they said, meant “take everything,” Ryswick, “seize everything,” and Utrecht, “out of right.” “If one considers things,” commented Pöllnitz, “this might be fairly true ; but the punsters would not be on the side of the Allies.”

Directly the Baron reached Utrecht he went to call on the Prussian envoys, Counts Dönhof, Metternich, and Biberstein, to hear news of the Fatherland. There were no inns in Utrecht, and the envoys were very poorly lodged, and that not for lack of paying for it, for several of them might have bought the homes they occupied for what they paid in rent during the time of their mission.”

Pöllnitz found another old friend, or rather, enemy, at Utrecht. The Countess Wartenberg had retired thither after her husband's death at Frankfurt. If King Frederic had wept when his old friend's funeral

passed the Schloss, "the Countess had been more self-possessed, and was careful to give way to no sad thoughts. On the contrary," comments Pöllnitz, "she was pleased at finding herself in possession of great wealth, and, what pleased her even more, at being her own mistress."

Utrecht being for the time the gayest city she could find, she took up her residence there, and embarked in intrigues. Chevalier de B—— had been her friend of the moment, and he had just left to carry the terms of peace to Paris.

Pöllnitz did not trouble himself to call upon the daughter of the Rhine boatman, especially as he found he would have been the only one of the Prussian Court then at Utrecht to pay her any civility. However, by chance they met. She had brought with her a young French lady whom he had known well in Berlin. As the latter was very amusing, and as he was anxious to glean some gossip of the Countess's doings, he renewed his acquaintance while quite declining to call upon the Wartenberg. "However, the young lady took upon herself to inform the Countess of my visit, and to tell that she thought I much resembled the Chevalier de B——." This was enough. The Countess, despite his refusals, wished to see him. So, one day, when he was calling on the young lady, she came into the room. "As you are too haughty," she began, "to come and see me, I come to see you," and, without giving him time to reply, continued: "You are much improved in looks. You are like the Chevalier de B—— as two peas; the most perfect resemblance, even to the very voice!"

"Nothing," says Pöllnitz, "was less true. The Commander was handsome and well-made, and I was never foolish enough to think myself that." All these compliments of the Countess seemed so odd that he was "as embarrassed as a schoolboy just left college," and hardly knew what he was saying. He gave her his hand to escort her back to her rooms, where, but for the timely announcement of a visitor, one of the French plenipotentiaries, "without taking upon myself the air

of a man of *bonne fortune*, or of an *indiscret*, it would only have depended upon myself to have been taken for the Chevalier, body and soul." After this kind of visit he arranged matters so as to avoid a similar one during the short time he stayed at Utrecht.

Thence he went by Wesel to Magdeburg and Brandenburg, to Berlin.

"On the day I arrived I was so tired at having travelled night and day that I stayed in bed till the evening, when I had the honour of saluting the Queen; . . . the King was at Potsdam. Her Majesty still kept her room, as she had not yet got up after her confinement. . . . I was received with a coldness which led me to judge that I could not hope to be in favour at Court, or, at least to be in harmony with its tone. It was not the same with the Mesdames the Margraves; they received me with every possible expression of kindness. Madame la Margrave Dowager" (Philip of Schwedt's widow) "especially assured me that she would continue the protection with which she had always honoured me. As for the city of Berlin, it had not recovered from the loss it has sustained in the death of King Frederic" ("the *gute Herr*," his granddaughter writes), "regretted and wept by the whole kingdom. The King, his son, indeed gives rise to great hopes; but the changes he has introduced in the Court make people regret the late King."

Pomp and circumstance had vanished. The flowing perukes gave place to helmets. All who wished to curry favour with the new King donned, as his daughter puts it, "sword and cuirass." Frederic William's one passion was for soldiers. His father, he averred, "kept no sword with which to enforce his pen." So—

"He reduced his household accordingly, and at once, to the lowest footing of the indispensable, and discharged a whole regiment of superfluous official persons, court



flunkeys—inferior, superior, supreme—in the most ruthless manner. He does not intend keeping any *Oberhofmarschall*, or the like idle person, henceforth ; thinks a minimum of gold-sticks ought to suffice every man . . . eight lackeys at six shillings a week, three active pages, instead of three dozen idle ones . . . thirty saddle-horses, instead of a thousand . . . shaved down everything to half a thaler. Even the incomes of the Royal Family he cut down, and only kept ten thousand a year for himself.”

Small chance for poor young Baron von Pöllnitz ! Despite their boyhood's comradeship in the mimic regiment and the French theatricals, our butterfly hero at once perceived that he had nothing in common with, or to hope for, from Frederic William. For years to come this indeed was the case. Then the levelling hand of Time asserted itself.

Pöllnitz beat a retreat from Berlin. He decided to settle his money matters as speedily as possible, and then to hie him back to the more congenial atmosphere of Paris.

He went to Zell to look into accounts with the lawyer to whom he had entrusted his interests in his mother's estates. There he found matters anything but to his liking. Countess von Wense had bequeathed the greater part of her fortune to the children of her third marriage, so that Charles came into very much less than he had expected. This was a great blow, in view of debts in Paris, and fine plans for a gay life there in the future. All Charles could look forward to was the reversion of his grandfather's property which was settled on his brother, and the stony-hearted cousin, Henrietta Charlotte, at Hanover.

From Zell Pöllnitz went to Hamburg. He had been there as a boy, but had not seen the sights. Life in that wealthy city was more lively than in the other Hanseatic towns, and he spent some days pleasantly enough. Most of the German Princes had residents at Hamburg,

who kept up a fairly good opera all the year round. Each of these envoys attended to one department of it, "so that one saw M. d'A. presiding at rehearsals; M. de W. arranging the ballets; M. S. ordering dresses, wigs, rouge, and patches for the actresses."

The Dutch gardens, just without the gates, were a great joy to the inhabitants, the promenades charming, especially that on the Alster basin, tree-planted, with a double avenue commanding a fine view of the river and the country-houses in gardens, and woods and meadows. There were several well-born people to be known—

"Where one is well received, and one has good company, sees a good deal of each other, dines, sups, and lives well. The merchants are affable and polite, and travelled. All that I find to say against them is that they treat their wives after the fashion of the East, where the women go nowhere except to the mosques. Here, they hardly go anywhere except to the churches, or, if they go for a walk, it is accompanied by their husbands. A stranger is rarely admitted to their assemblies; when he puts in an appearance these poor women are quite surprised, as a Sultana might be on seeing a Capuchin enter the harem."

Pöllnitz made the acquaintance of a Herr Brocks, a magistrate and a poet. "His works do him honour, and should convince a stranger who understands German that one can say as fine things in that language as in any other," adds the Baron, with an unwonted praise of his native language as a literary vehicle, which he failed, however, to put in practice himself.

"A cannon-shot from Hamburg lies Altona," in Danish Holstein, "notable," thought Pöllnitz, "for the variety of its religious edifices and for offering an asylum to bankrupts." The name, meaning "all too near," given in derision by a King of Denmark to protesting Hamburg councillors when he was building the city at their gates. Only the year before Pöllnitz's visit it had

been burnt by the Swedes, and still lay desolate. He left Hamburg only just in time, for a few days later the plague broke out there, and the Elector of Hanover forced the city to put itself in quarantine.

Pöllnitz drove the twelve miles across the moors to Zell, over a shocking road, and, without stopping there, to Aix-la-Chapelle, arriving in time for the famous exhibition of the relics, which only takes place once every seven years. "The ceremony was held on the top of the Tower of the city, while the people knelt in the square below, and in the adjoining streets, for only people of quality are allowed on the Tower and to inspect, but not touch, the relics." From all the provinces of Germany, even from distant Hungary and the Tyrol, had pilgrims journeyed. "The only reward these poor people had was spying these things from afar. The city of Aix feasts them, but mostly they return without knowing what they have seen."

Our hero was not superstitiously inclined, and the holy relics made but little impression upon him. He only remembers—

"A chemise which, they assure me, belonged to the Virgin. The marks one sees on it are those said to be of the milk when she was suckling the Saviour of the world. This chemise seemed to me to be without seam, and of a material which I cannot well describe, for it was neither linen nor cotton."

Nor was he more credulous as to the "extraordinary story of the resurrection of S. Manolph and S. Goudulph at the consecration, in the presence of Charlemagne, by Leo III of the Church of Our Lady," despite the "authentic testimony" to it in the church of Maestricht, "for it seemed to me, without desiring to penetrate this mystery, that if these two bishops really were saints it was useless for the Pope to give them the Benediction, as they were older saints than the Holy Father."





THE SPRING AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE.

From "Les Amusemens des Eaux d'Aix-la-Chapelle, par le Baron de Pélnitz."





It was as a fashionable watering-place that Aix appealed to the gay young Baron, rather than as a holy city.

“Of all the place where one takes the baths, none is more pleasantly situated than Aix, surrounded by hills forming a pretty valley. One is excellently fed and lodged there. At Bougy’s house, near the springs, the Royalties of Denmark and their suites were well lodged. During the summer the assemblies and balls take place there. The town of Aix is famous for its hot baths, and the waters which are drunk twice a year, in spring and autumn. At these two seasons a great number of visitors arrive. The waters are hot and have a very bad taste; they smell of rotten eggs, which makes it difficult to take them the first day, but after that one becomes used to them, and they do one good. The Baths are excellent for the shrinkage of nerves and for wounds. There is no place where one can drink the waters more comfortably; one finds in abundance all one can desire, and, above all, good company; the vicinity of Brabant, Liège, France, Holland, and Germany attracts a great deal of society, and thus one amuses oneself very well indeed.”

His experiences at Aix he was, in later years, to turn to good account.

Pöllnitz went on from Aix through Maestricht and Louvain, and reached his Mecca “more in love than ever. I was received by my beloved with every mark of affection, which led me to believe that I was the happiest of mortals. I was indeed, because, till then, my happiness consisted in being in her favour. But my natural fickleness soon altered my opinion.”

“I met the Marquise de P——.” Pöllnitz is really tantalizing with his mysterious initials. Was it the fascinating de Prie, mistress of the Duc de Bourbon, “extraordinarily pretty and a good figure,” tells Saint-

Simon, "with much wit, and astonishingly well-read?" Or the Regent's "little black crow, whose heart was never vacant," the Marquise de Parabère, "who," his mother writes, "retails follies which amuse my son and make him forget his work"; . . . "a drunkard"? Or again, the dainty little Marquise de Polignac, who out-heroded them all in "the disordered mad life at Paris, which became daily," Madame thought, "more hateful and more horrible"; the Polignac to whom the son of the Turkish ambassador said that her reputation had reached even to Constantinople—"and I see, Madame, that we were told the truth." Not one of these ladies but might have cast a favouring, though passing, glance on the attractive young German Baron.

He "ingenuously confesses that all my deep feelings for S—— cooled down. I found that nothing could equal my passion. S—— soon discovered my inconstancy and reproached me with it; but reproached me without the bitterness which love alone can inspire. My passion awake again, and I felt on this occasion:

"Qu'une flamme mal éteinte  
Est facile à allumer,  
Et qu'avec peu de contrainte,  
On recommence d'aimer."

"My feelings as a gentleman coincided with those of affection. I asked myself what cause for dissatisfaction could I have had with S——. At last I came to the conclusion against myself, as it were, that, without ingratitude, I could not give up such a sweet charmer. I took measures gradually to withdraw from the Marquise de P——. I had little trouble in stifling a passion, which, after all, was, so to say, but a flash in the pan."

Pöllnitz made a few months' stay in Paris, which was gay at this time with a great double royal wedding—between the Bourbons and Contis.

But the hero of the hour was Marshal Villars, the

victor of Denain, " whose two victories and one success " at the end of the war had been as balm in Gilead to the wounded pride of the French.

" Clear-minded, clever, supple, hard-working, brave, a fine soldier and a lucky captain, he was," says Pöllnitz. " Slander added that he was avaricious, like the Duke of Marlborough, and proud. I saw something of that. The Marshal was dining with D'Argenson, Grand Equerry of France ; I was present." The jovial-faced, well-set-up veteran, with his bright brown eyes, a great talker, held forth on his exploits. He had returned from the campaign with much loot. Pöllnitz listened attentively.

" He noticed that I was observing him ; he did not know who I was. He asked M. le Grand Ecuyer in a whisper. Then the Maréchal, hearing that I was a German, said some civil things. After that he went on with his conversation, and, speaking to me of his victory at Denain, in a tone which showed great satisfaction, asked : ' But why did your people drown themselves ? I am merciful, I would have given them quarter ; they should have asked me for it.'

" I confess that my Teutonic honour over-mastered me. The terms of ' clemency ' and ' quarter ' seemed to me insulting to my nation. I was young and rash ; I very nearly made him an unsuitable reply. But I recollected myself, and only at the second or third attack did I at last answer him, ' that it seemed to me that he should not be surprised at what the German troops had done, because, till the day of Denain, they had known of his valour, but had not experienced his clemency.'

" I saw that my reply did not please him ; he changed the conversation, and did not speak to me again all the day.

" Some time after the peace, I made it up with him. It was at the Duchesse de Lude's, lady-in-waiting to the Duchesse de Bourgogne. There was a large com-



pany, the Maréchal de Villars among others. Conversation turned on the custom of the ancients to give surnames to their heroes, and we blamed the moderns for not imitating them. 'And what name should we give M. le Maréchal?' said the Duchesse de Lude.

"I spoke, and said: 'It would not be difficult. It seems to me that there is no title would suit M. le Maréchal better than that of Germanicus Français.'

"This reply was quite to the Marshal's taste. He looked at me smiling, and said many kind things to me."

After Pöllnitz had been some months in Paris, advice from Berlin told him that the new King was about to set up his household, and that Charles could not do better than come and offer his services. It does honour to his patriotism that, happy though he was at Paris, he soon made up his mind as to what he ought to do.

"I had always been brought up in the feeling that one should prefer the service of one's own sovereign to that of any other; besides, I felt myself allied by nature to the blood of our Kings. So I decided to quit Paris yet once more. From my character the reader will judge that I felt some pain in forming such a resolve. I confess frankly that I was deeply moved at leaving a place where I enjoyed pleasures such as I well knew I should not find elsewhere; but in the end I listened to the call of duty, and the tears I saw shed melted me, indeed, but had no power to induce me to change my plan."

Pöllnitz went by Wesel to Hanover, where he fell ill.

"My design had been to remain incognito, but the state in which I was obliged me to call in a doctor. For a while I thought all remedies would be in vain, and that I must indeed think of making the Long Journey."

Cousin Charlotte Henrietta heard of her young relative's arrival, and informed the Electress, "who kindly sent to inquire news of me, and continued to do so twice a day while I was ill. This Princess has always shown me kindness for which I shall be eternally grateful."

"Directly I was able to go out I did not fail to go and present my very humble thanks to Madame the Electress." She received the young man better than he had dared to hope, and the interest she had shown in him led Charlotte Henrietta, and also the Countess Kilmannsegg, to suggest that "if I were to solicit permission to enter her service I should easily receive it." Though Pöllnitz doubted of his success, these ladies persuaded him to try; but experience showed that he was right. He made his petition by letter, which he thought afterwards had been a *sottise*, as it gave the Electress time to ask advice. Which she did, and unluckily she consulted Frau von B——. "This lady could not abide me, and I have since found out the reason of her aversion." The Baron had perpetrated another *sottise*.

For he had told Madame, who had written to the Electress, with whom she corresponded at least once a week, that the Electoral Prince George was paying particular attention to this lady. "This was enough to set violently against me a person who, exteriorly, professed the most austere virtue." Frau von B—— was delighted to find means of revenging herself on being consulted by the Electress. She managed to persuade the latter not to receive Pöllnitz into her service, finding plenty of good reasons to allege, "the desire for revenge," moralizes our hero, "always furnishes specious pretexts enough to injure one's enemy."

The Electress took her advice, but the refusal was most kindly put.

"She could not imagine," she wrote, "that, after having served a King, I should desire to serve an old

Princess like herself; that the service of the Elector, her son, would suit me better, and that she would be pleased to help me to enter it, but, for herself, she would reserve the pleasure of receiving me into her service till she was Queen of England; because, if that happened, she would be more in a position to advance my career."

Over a refusal so kindly put, Pöllnitz could feel no bitterness. He says he only took the step to please his cousin, who "was keenly annoyed by the Electress's conduct, not so much out of love for me (I knew where I was on that score) as from wounded pride. Her vanity suffered greatly; she thought herself in favour, and she perceived that she had no influence." Her resentment went so far that she prevented Pöllnitz taking leave of the Electress, who left a few days later for Gohre and the Baron for Berlin. The clever old lady and the amusing lad to whom she had been kind were not to meet again.

Disappointment was again to dog Pöllnitz's footsteps when he reached the capital. Frederic William was strenuously at work, as King, farmer, and drill-sergeant. The whole of Europe was being ransacked for recruits for his giant Grenadier regiment. These "long fellows" became "channels to the favour," as his daughter puts it, of the "rugged Orson." Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau has such influence that, Pöllnitz writes, he persuaded the King to cut down his household and suite almost to "the level of that of a private person," in order that there might be more money to spend on the army. When Pöllnitz reached Berlin nearly all the few appointments were already given away.

Relying on "auld lang syne," he appealed to von Printzen, who had known him so well as a boy when Printzen was tutor to Frederic William, and who had taken him as a page on the mission to Charles XII. But times had changed. In this austere, parsimonious Court, where there was to be all work and no play, there was no niche for a lively, amusing young fellow, a delightful com-

panion, a wit, and a raconteur, with a good head for, and much experience at, lansquenet and basset.

Printzen, who belonged to the old régime, did his best and spoke for Pöllnitz; but his request was refused, and the refusal hurt Pöllnitz all the more in that it was very far from being couched in the flattering language which had sweetened the similar bitter pill which he had been obliged to swallow at Hanover. He felt aggrieved, and through no fault of his own. Frederic William was filling his Court with parvenus. Of the three new Ministers, Kreuz had been known to Pöllnitz as Advocate-General of the Prince Royal's regiment in the old days, and his new elevation to the ranks of the nobility "had not made him lose his bourgeois appearance;" while Kraut, the Paymaster-General, had been a tradesman in Berlin, had "sold goods by the yard," and owed his title to his wealth.

"I felt very much," writes Pöllnitz, "the conduct of the Court towards me; I had never done anything that should bar me from an appointment among my own class; my ancestors had always served there, and had held a position sufficiently distinguished for me to hope that some consideration might be shown me; moreover, I had had the honour of being Gentleman of the Chamber to the late King, yet I had the chagrin of seeing people who had never been to Court, and who were mostly of obscure birth, preferred before me. Seeing myself, therefore, without any hope of succeeding with regard to the Court, I thought I ought to try my luck elsewhere."

Shaking the dust of Prussia off his feet, Pöllnitz considered taking service with the King of Poland.



## CHAPTER VII

It was to Count Flemming, the Prime Minister and Field-Marshal of Saxony, that Pöllnitz owed the suggestion of entering the service of Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony, now, at last, firmly seated on the uneasy Polish throne.

Pöllnitz gives a clear portrait of the man who had been mainly instrumental in assuring that much-fought-for but questionable possession to his master.

Flemming was a remarkable man, of a family which had branches in Poland, Sweden, Germany, and Scotland. At that time Lord Wigton was the head of the Scottish branch. Flemming's father had been head of the Swedish Regency in Pomerania, where his son was born. The latter studied at Frankfort-on-the-Oder and at Utrecht, "learning to speak Latin elegantly." He took service under the Elector of Brandenburg, and saw fighting in Piedmont. Then he entered the service of Saxony, and commanded the Imperial troops against the Turks. At the peace he was sent to Poland, and, by means of family connections added to good luck and ability, brought about Augustus's election to the throne. Flemming fought against Charles XII in Lithuania, and married a Sapiieha, one of the first families. Charles, when he carried all before him, demanded that Flemming, as his subject born, should be given up to him. But the Count escaped to Brandenburg till the storm blew over, and there met Pöllnitz at Frederic's Court. On his return to Saxony there was for a while fierce rivalry between him and Schulemburg, the senior Saxon Lieutenant-General. Then the latter, after his defeat by the Swedes at Frauensdorf, passed

over to the Venetian service, and Flemming reigned supreme in his master's favour. He was accused of having instigated Augustus to deliver up Potkul, the Russian envoy, to Charles; "and, if Augustus had not been more generous than Flemming, Charles would himself have been arrested" on that strange surprise visit he paid to Augustus at Dresden. When Charles was overthrown, and Augustus's Polish sovereignty secured, Flemming devoted himself to arranging the Northern League and the subsequent peace, and to marrying Augustus's son to the Emperor's daughter.

At the time when Pöllnitz again met Flemming in Berlin—

"He was rather king's courier between Dresden, Berlin, and Warsaw than acting as envoy and Prime Minister. . . . All his life he had been seeking his own ends first, and those of the King, his master, secondly, and I am not aware that I wrong him," adds Pöllnitz, "in saying that he was more the Minister of the King of Prussia than of the King of Poland."

Very tall, with hawk's eyes, a mocking smile and a haughty air, proud and inordinately ambitious, Flemming was an indefatigable worker and an equally arduous pleasure-seeker. Two hours' sleep sufficed him. "All means were alike to him if only he succeeded in his designs. Perjury, deceit, politeness, lavishness—all served him in turn; but his manners were in truth those of a captain of dragoons rather than of Field-Marshal and Prime Minister."

This was the man into whose hands poor, disappointed, chagrined Pöllnitz now entrusted his fortunes. "I made most of my friendship with him, and paid my respects to him zealously. This Minister seemed to have every intention of doing me a service, and he promised to speak for me to the King, his master." Flemming left Berlin for Warsaw at the end of November,

1713, and Pöllnitz followed him. He was presented to the King, and to all the nobility of the Court.

Augustus the Strong was then forty-four, a fine figure, handsome, stately, a charming mixture of strength and valour with gentleness and politeness.

“Never was Prince more magnificent, or more lavish, never one who accompanied his gifts with more graciousness. Soldier and politician, modest in prosperity, firm in adversity, he has been seen, even in the depths of misfortune, to speak to his enemies with the pleasant and contented air which men used to dealing with great affairs know how to assume under the most cruel mortifications.”

In his youth Augustus had travelled much, and Pöllnitz recounts a strange incident which occurred to him when amusing himself in the gay city of Venice. Wishing to consult a celebrated astrologer, Augustus went to him “accompanied only by two gentlemen, and all three very simply dressed. The Prince, in order not to be recognized, had hidden his brown hair under a flaxen wig, and was the last to enter the astrologer’s study, and made as if he were following the others. Yet the astrologer spoke to him, calling him Monseigneur and Highness,” in spite of the Prince’s disclaimers. He then showed him a magic mirror. “Look in here,” he said to the Prince, “and you will see the principal events of your life.” Augustus beheld himself clad first in Electoral robes, then with a crown on his head, and finally, wounded, and covered with blood. Pöllnitz had this story from a courtier who was told it by the King himself, and goes on to say that a stone-mason had predicted to Madame de Maintenon, when she was widow Scarron, her future rank and fortune, “and I could tell of other examples, quite as strange,” adding, sceptical as usual, “which surprise but do not convince me.”

Nothing could have been better, he thought, than his

début at the Court of Poland. The French temperament of the Poles, and that of their gorgeous, pleasure-loving, and easy-going monarch, were precisely to his liking. "I was patronized by the man who cut the finest figure after the King, which was the reason why every one was so civil to me."

But the King soon left for Germany. In spite of all he had gone through "to gain and then to recover the Polish crown," his life at Warsaw did not really suit him.

"There," says Pöllnitz, "he has only the vain pomp of kingly majesty; he is more limited than any other monarch in the world; the least innovation, the smallest act of independent authority, causes the Poles to cry out, and they think themselves at once absolved from any obedience they owe him. Every one of gentle birth there is independent; the nobles make the Kings, and only appear at Court in order to ask favours, and if they receive them they depart ungrateful, and if they are refused they leave with the intention of revenging themselves upon the first occasion. The climate is severe, the people are barbarous, and the King, adored in Saxony, is barely liked in Poland."

As Pöllnitz deemed it best to await Augustus's return from Germany before speaking to him of his own affairs, he remained at Warsaw, "and spent his time most agreeably. I was soon acquainted with all the Polish nobility, who were full of every civility for me."

"Polite Polish society," as Rulhière remarks, "felt itself in a most halcyon condition, given up to the agreeable, and that only." Pöllnitz found "Paris over again, in the same politeness, and in a certain ease of manner of which the French think they are the sole possessors. The Polish ladies are very pleasant, they all have *esprit*, and are very lively. It can easily be



imagined that, with these qualities, they are not indifferent to pleasure ; in fact, I noticed in them a delicacy and a taste for everything that can be called amusement. They are passionately fond of music, and still more of plays. At Warsaw there is plenty to satisfy them ; the King is a prince as gallant as he is magnificent, and likes everything done at his Court in a manner worthy of a great king. He maintains French actors, and often gives balls and concerts. To these amusements are generally added beautiful fêtes which the King gives to the ladies of his Court, at which this Prince is always admired for his good looks and for the affability which accompanies all his actions. . . . The Polish nobles are not so fine as their ladies, by any means, nor are they equal to them in taste and arrangements. The servants and the carriages are usually badly turned out ; their tables are, indeed, profusely laden, but without refinement, owing, I believe, to lack of good maids and clever cooks, for otherwise Poland is the best country in the world for good living. The butchers' meat is delicious, the fish excellent and plentiful ; no wine grows in the country, but one does not notice it amongst the Polish nobility, where the Hungarian wine, though very dear, is drunk like water. I noticed something among most of them which does not befit with the grandeur on which they pride themselves ; it is that the master of the house and his particular friends drink very good wine indeed, while the other guests are obliged to content themselves with rather common wine. It is noticeable that, though Poland produces in abundance all that is necessary for life, it is a country very uncomfortable for travellers, especially for those who are unable to carry everything with them. I have never seen any place where the inns were so badly furnished ; one scarcely finds a chair to sit on. Therefore travellers of a certain position take care to carry about with them all they require. The Duke of York, when Bishop of Osnabrück, remarked with reference to this practice that there is no country he knew of where one is so at home as in Poland,

because when one travels one always finds oneself with one's own furniture."

When he heard that the King was about to return to Germany Pöllnitz at once left Warsaw in company with Count Hoyhm, Minister of State, called the Mæcenas of Saxony, "one of the most polite of the Ministers, who is the greatest scholar, and who most patronizes literary people, in his splendid Hôtel at Dresden, one of the largest buildings in that city."

They went by way of Breslau.

"A fine large city, with many nobility in residence in winter. . . . As Count Flemming was staying two days, I stayed there also, and saw very good company, especially at the Princess of Teschen. This fair lady, a Fräulein von Lubomirski, a former favourite of the King and mother by him of the Chevalier de Saxe," was "a very grande dame, who entertained with much magnificence."

Fain would the Baron have lingered a day or two longer at Breslau, but deemed it wise not to lose sight of Flemming, on whom he had built all his hopes. So they went together to Leipzig to the famous fair. The Saxon Royalties always graced these gatherings with their presence, as Leipzig was in their country, and, as Augustus had been some time out of his hereditary dominions, there was a great gathering of Princes of the Blood, legitimate, legitimized, and recognized, and many people of quality came to pay their respects.

Saxony at that period was, after Austrian dominions, the largest and most important of all the States of the Empire. Its capital, though not very large, was well fortified, "and well planned with high, solid houses, wide, straight streets, well paved, clean, and well lighted at night, to be ranked among the finest towns in the world," thought Pöllnitz. In his day it consisted of

two quarters, divided by the Elbe, and joined by a stone bridge.

Pöllnitz came by way of Meissen, of porcelain fame, the factory started for Augustus by an alchemist, whom he immured in his castle of Königstein to make gold, but who turned him out what was quite as lucrative, the finest china in the world.

“Dresden was the pleasure-centre of Germany, and entertainments make a stay there scarcely different to Paris.” Magnificent were the fêtes given during carnival time, for Pöllnitz had arrived at a propitious moment—

“And all who were present were even more delighted with the King’s pleasant manners than with the loveliness of the scene and the magnificence of the feasts. . . . Though the King divides his time between his kingdom and his Electorate, it is true that he appears to enjoy himself better in Saxony than in Poland. It is his hereditary country, and he is absolute there; his will is that of his subjects, by whom he is adored rather than beloved. Saxony provides him with the means of keeping up his dignity, and offers all that can contribute to the pleasure of a great monarch. His Court” (now that Louis XIV had grown old and devout, and austere Frederic William reigned at Berlin) “was the most brilliant in Europe, full of magnificence, stateliness, and pleasure.”

The Baron haunted the noble Palais des Indes et d’Hollande, where his friend Flemming lived in much state, for he had abundantly feathered his nest.

“All the rooms of the three floors were so many china cabinets, filled with Japanese and Chinese porcelain. . . . I do not think that all the shops of Amsterdam put together can furnish such old and rare china as is here. They say it is worth one million crowns. The furniture of the house is from India. There is one

decoration which I have never seen elsewhere; it is of feathers, all of different colours, and all natural, worked together with so much art that one mistakes it for satin with bouquets of flowers."

The garden, sloping down to the Elbe, was adorned with statues from Rome, much admired in Dresden, "but not greatly so at Rome."

Pöllnitz went to the wild-beast fights in the Arena, of "lions, tigers, bears, the fiercest beasts the four quarters of the world can supply." He saw the Green Vaults, with their immense collection of jewels, of ornaments, and apparel, "one of the finest spots in the world . . . if I described them all I should write a volume." The Zvvinge-Garten of the palace he thought the Tuileries of Dresden. He saw the Palais de Turquie in the suburbs, entirely furnished in oriental style. He went over Moritzburg, at which Augustus was still at work, Bot, the Bernini of the period, the architect.

Pöllnitz was in Dresden in time for the wedding of the King's son, Maurice of Saxe, which was celebrated with great splendour. Imitating the example of Louis XIV, Augustus had legitimized four natural sons and three daughters. Of these Maurice was the eldest, the best beloved, and the one who in temperament most resembled his father, but surpassed him in military genius, "one of the most delightful of noblemen," Pöllnitz calls him. His mother, the beautiful Aurora von Königsmarck, sister of the lover of Dorothea of Zell, was living in retreat as Prioress of the abbey of Quedlemburg. "Of all the King's favourites," writes Pöllnitz, "she was the one whose favour lasted longest" (a mistake: it lasted under a year!) "and who in her retreat knew how to retain His Majesty's esteem and consideration."

When Maurice de Saxe, young, gay, handsome, and gallant, a *beau sabreur*, returned at fifteen from the campaign in Flanders, where he had served his apprenticeship to war, he lacked money. His mother schemed



to marry him to "the priceless jewel," the rich heiress, Victoria von Löben, who, at eight years old, had been betrothed to Count von Friesen. Her father dies, her mother marries again, a Baron Gersdorf, who induces her to betroth the heiress to his nephew of the same name. Young Gersdorf elopes with Victoria, aged nine; great scandal in Saxony and Poland, and Friesen raises a clamour. Aurora von Königsmarck now saw her chance. She induced the King to summon Victoria and her mother; the marriage was declared void. The child was removed from her mother's control, as the latter had been party to the abduction; Gersdorf was made to give up his wife, and Friesen married off to one of the King's daughters by Countess Cosel. The way was now clear for Maurice.

But he was only sixteen and athirst for glory. An early marriage had no attractions for him; but money had. "Soit!" he exclaimed to his mother, "épousons la Victoire!"

"I made love as I made war." The heiress succumbed. The young couple wrote love-letters to each other ("très fidèle jusqu'à la mort") and poetry. But the King, thinking them too young, deferred the marriage.

Countess Cosel, his favourite, now attempted to estrange him from Aurora's influence and secure the heiress for one of her sons. But the lovers approached the King together, and he gave his consent to their prayers.

The wedding took place at Moritzburg; the bride fifteen, the bridegroom a year older. It was a very fine affair, chronicles Pöllnitz, all the Court present, and fêtes following for many days. But the match turned out ill; the young couple led a cat-and-dog life for a short time; their son died, and they separated, after Maurice had run through all his wife's large fortune.

"When the King was at Dresden pleasure abounded there: plays, masquerades, balls, banquets, tilting at the



FREDERIC AUGUSTUS I, ELECTOR OF SAXONY AND KING OF POLAND.

From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.



ring, sleigh-races, tourings, hunting-parties . . . most of the fêtes public. The plays and masquerades open to any one who was well dressed. . . . The Saxons are naturally frivolous, but nothing do they like better than women and play," writes Pöllnitz.

The Margravine of Bayreuth writes of the profligate Augustus's dissipated Court as "the island of Cythère, where the King kept a harem of the most lovely women of all countries, and where every one followed his example . . . and where Bacchus and Venus were the fashionable divinities."

Pöllnitz found that the Saxons, "loving display and extravagance, more than all Germans, affected to imitate the French, with whom they sympathize most, particularly in the changes of fashion, in the ease with which they make acquaintances and form friendships, and also, perhaps, in the fickleness with which they cease to be friends. . . . The fair, white Saxon women have," thought Pöllnitz, "the most beautiful faces in the world. Most of them have fine figures, which is what strikes one most. . . . They are tall and slender, they dance well, dress richly, are lively and playful, gentle, but cunning and shrewd. . . . A separate volume would be necessary to describe all the amusements at Dresden."

Naturally the young Baron was fascinated with that beautiful, brilliant, eccentric creature, the Countess Orselska, a Pole, the King's favourite natural daughter. She much resembled him, loving dress and display and pleasure, and usually dressed in a riding-habit, or like a man.

"It was in this costume I first saw her," writes Pöllnitz. "She was riding, wearing a coat of purple braided with gold, and the Blue Ribbon of Poland. I was alone, and so could not ask who she was. I took her for some young stranger lord that I had not yet



seen. I had never seen any one ride better, nor look more attractive ; many ladies would have liked a lover like her. The same evening I saw her at a court ball, still dressed as a man ; the richest coat, short hair, well frizzed. Love was not more beautiful when he appeared to Psyche. Her good looks and the grace with which I saw her dance a minuet led me to ask who the handsome young man was. Count Botofski (her half-brother) heard me. 'That young man whom you admire so much would not do you much harm if you were a woman, but he might do you some now. Come'—and he took me by the hand—'I will present you to him, and you can get out of it as well as you can.'

"Botofski said to his sister: 'My sister, here is a cavalier who will give you what is due to your charms, and I can guarantee that he will be ready to serve you in all you may require from him.'

"Mademoiselle Orselska smiled at this. I saluted with all the respect due to her rank, and she received me in the pleasantest way possible."

Next day he saw her dressed as a woman and found her even more delightful. "I see her daily, and, the more I see of her, the more I think a cadet of the Holstein house, to whom she is betrothed, happy to be her husband."

Poor Orselska ! there was little happiness about the marriage. The bridegroom married her to obtain employment of Augustus, but after the latter's death he left her, and even stripped her of her wealth.

The main reason why Pöllnitz thought himself likely to be successful in his application for a court appointment at Dresden was Flemming's well-known liking, as a foreigner himself, for foreigners.

"The chief posts at this Court were held by strangers, and the Saxons themselves have very little part in the affairs of State. It is a debt they owe to Count Flem-

ming. This Minister, vain, haughty, overbearing, wishes all to bow before him. He finds such submission more from foreigners than from Saxons, naturally proud and averse to being under the yoke. . . . Flemming seemed much pleased with the attention that people paid me, or, perhaps, I was not perspicacious enough to discover that it was quite immaterial to him. It was excusable in me not to suspect his duplicity towards me ; up till then I had but reason to be pleased with his generosity and with the good-will he evinced in helping me. But people took pains to disillusion me, and a short time afterwards I discovered for myself that the fine promises he had made me were but what is called 'court holy water. . . .' I should doubtless have taken more pleasure in all these amusements had I been able to be satisfied about the state of my affairs. I had always reckoned much on Flemming's promises, but when I was at Dresden matters assumed another aspect. I reminded him of his promise, he replied with a gay air which showed me that I must not hope much from him. Yet, in order to have nothing to reproach myself with, I continued to profess great friendship for him. I did not fail to meet with several rebuffs, which, however, did not repel me. I had all the more reason to bear my ill-luck patiently because I knew that he treated his most devoted followers in the same way.

"At last, unwilling to do anything for me himself, he sent me to M. de Louvendahl, Grand Marshal of the Court. A Dane by birth, who lived in great state and kept a good table, he was very civil to foreigners. He sent me to Vitzthum, the King's favourite. I was delighted with the politeness and good manners of this latter ; never, I think, was there a favourite more obliging, or who gave himself less airs. He did not dally with me, but made me aware of the impossibility of obtaining any appointment at Court unless the King, by a special favour, could do me an act of kindness ; which could only be at the expense of several Polish nobles who were all begging for places to which their

birth gave them a special claim. Still, I did not lose hopes of succeeding, and, as this favour could only be granted through the channel of Flemming, I again had recourse to him. I had no reason to be pleased; doubtless I spoke to him about my business at the wrong moment, when he was, perhaps, busy with other affairs of more consequence; finally, he repulsed me so severely that nothing more was necessary to make me relinquish my expectations. I took leave of the King and Queen and set about returning to Berlin."

But, ere Pöllnitz could leave for Berlin, an incident occurred to him which, added to the chagrin he felt at not having succeeded in his plans, combined to make his stay in Dresden as unbearable as it had been at first delightful. He had drawn at the fair at Leipzig a note of hand of 300 crowns, payable to bearer. The day before he was to start a merchant in Dresden, who was authorized to receive it, sent to him for payment, as the time of the note had just expired. Pöllnitz not being at home, this man made use of a custom, much in vogue in Saxony, which is to seize any one who fails to pay up a bill of exchange on the stipulated day. So, when Pöllnitz was getting into his post-chaise at ten o'clock at night, he was arrested. Having lost a great deal of money at play during the carnival, he had not the necessary cash by him. His only resource was Flemming, to whom he did not apply in vain. "It was the only time that I can remember that he did me any service. I repaid him shortly after my arrival in Berlin."

Pöllnitz did not long remain in his native city. He spent a few days on the outskirts, on an estate of his own, some six miles off. Here he was bored to death, the boredom such as only the born courtier knows, "neither happy at Court, nor happy out of it." Once more his thoughts and wishes turned towards Paris, though he still intended seeking employment either at Berlin or elsewhere. He was only twenty-one, and

luck was terribly against him. There was no one to hold out a helping hand to him ; his brother away with his regiment, cousin Charlotte anything but friendly. A further misfortune now happened to him.

“I was a new Orestes pursued by Fate from one country to the other.” As he was starting on his journey he had a fall from his horse, and broke his leg. He was terribly afraid of having it badly set and being lame for life. He did indeed halt a little ever after ; “notre boiteux satyre,” Frederic the Great dubs him. However, after suffering a great deal of pain, it happily healed enough in nine days for him to be carried into Berlin, as he could not drive either in post-chaise or coach.

“I was carried by porters, which made my entry most comical. This new turn-out astonished all who saw it, especially the children, who, unused to such an equipage, followed me from the outskirts of the town to my lodging, and, as the handful went on increasing, my cortège consisted of quite two hundred people by the time that I reached my house.”

But the move had been an unwise one. His leg inflamed, an abscess formed, and for twenty days Pöllnitz was laid up in great pain. Directly he was able to go out he went to pay his respects to the Queen. He found the Court in a great state of delight at the news of the accession of the Elector of Hanover to the throne of England, as Queen Anne had just died. After a stay of a few days in Berlin, Pöllnitz took leave of the Queen and went to Hamburg.

Here he was warmly welcomed by his friend L——, whom he had known when he was of small estate, but who now, risen in the world, was Prussian envoy to the Circle of Lower Saxony, and, by means of ability and of money, on the high road to be a Minister of State and a Chamberlain.

He was delighted to exhibit his wealth and splendour



to Pöllnitz, but, unfortunately, his very rich wife was very old and very disagreeable, and he could not persuade her to live up to his position. An invitation to a supper-party gave Pöllnitz the opportunity of criticizing her taste in furniture and appraising her character.

“The first room was decorated in black and gold leather, with chairs of green taffetas trimmed with pink flowers. The second apartment was produced in a greeny tapestry, the seats were black velvet, gallooned in gold, everywhere were hung glass sconces. At the end of the room was an alcove hung with white and gold leather, in the middle of the alcove a bed of extraordinary construction : it had no curtains, four columns held up the canopy, all was inlaid with mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell ; a cornice of gilt wood surmounted it all. The bed was covered with a counterpane of black velvet gallooned in gold. In the four corners of the alcove were four statues of white marble, each holding a candle. There were other candles on gold sconces, and a rather fine chandelier. The whole looked like a lying-in-state room, rather than one in which one was to make merry.

“The charming hostess would not appear at table, but hid behind a door in the alcove, and peeped at us through the crack.” Suddenly, however, while they were all a-supping, “from the bottom of the alcove came a rather ugly figure all draped in white. I was the first to see it, and really, if I had faith in ghosts, I would have thought to see one. It was all like the scene of the Commander in the *Festin de Pierre*, except that we were not honoured by the slightest bow. I heard swearing and cursing at the servants, which made me suspect it to be the mistress of the house. I was not mistaken. We owed this apparition to a candle which was guttering into a black velvet chair. The lady had noticed it, and, hoping that a servant would also see it, had kept quiet ; however, as no one paid any attention, she came to the assistance of the chair.”

This apparition caused a great disturbance : excuses of the preoccupied servants, animated discussion between mistress and valets, all the guests, who had risen to their feet, kept standing, out of respect, the husband endeavouring to soothe his beloved spouse. At last, without the slightest greeting, she sat herself down to table. But the storm was not over. A footman, annoyed by the scolding, made a blunt remark ; the mistress flew into a rage and tried to box his ears soundly, but only struck a plate which he held up as a shield. This reduced her to silence for a while. Then worse ensued. The valet was dismissed on the spot, and the lady was so affected by the blow she gave herself that she was obliged to retire. No sooner had she vanished than all burst out laughing, headed by the husband, who begged his guests to speak their minds freely. Which they did. " But the lady had only hidden behind the door again, and revenged herself by cutting the dessert off, and the master had not sufficient authority to give us any."

Pöllnitz " was so pleased with this delightful meal " that, in dread of a second invitation, he left next day for Hanover, arriving just as the Elector was starting to take possession of the English Crown. The King and the Prince of Wales had a great send-off from Herrenhausen, and the Princess and her daughters followed him shortly. But Frederic was left behind to brighten up Hanover, the King assuring his subjects there that it would not be long ere he returned.

Pöllnitz went off to the baths at Aix to cure his leg, and from thence to Paris, via Maestricht. He tells a story of one of his ancestors, at that place, a Count Oувverkerke, a natural son of Maurice of Orange, and a Dutch Field-Marshal. He was riding on the bridge over the Meuse by the side of the coach of his lady-love, Mademoiselle de Feldtbrück, and pleading his cause. Wearied with his importunity, she at last deigned to reply that lovers did not spare words, but that, when it came to the proof, the instability of their affection

was to be seen. "For instance, Monsieur, I bet that, if I asked you to jump off this bridge into the river, you would not do it!"

The cavalier's only rejoinder was to set spurs to his horse, which sprang into the Meuse. Happily the eager lover was not thrown, and so stout was his steed that it carried him to an island, whence he was rescued in a boat. "After a proof of this kind the young lady could indeed boast either of being much beloved, or, of a very mad lover."

From Maestricht, by Louvain and Ghent, and his old battle-ground of Lille six years before, Pöllnitz, like another mad lover, hurried on to Paris, burning to see his beloved S—— again.

## CHAPTER VIII

THE Baron, immediately on reaching Paris, after a visit to a bath, went to pay his respects to Mademoiselle de S——. Absence had made the heart grow fonder, and one of the joys in seeing Paris again was to find her he loved.

What was his surprise when her mother received him all in tears, and told him, weeping, that her daughter had died a month before on an estate in Périgord, where she had gone to visit friends.

“I was so thunderstruck with this news that I could not utter a word. I fainted. I was carried back home, and instantly bled, but it failed to revive me. After a long time I returned to consciousness, but only to give way to my grief. It was not sorrow kept to myself; nothing was heard from me but cries, mingled with sobs, till at last all those who came to see me thought there was no hope for me, but that I should lose my mind with this attack. Indeed they were right, for I was half-way towards doing so. For five days I remained like this.”

Then appeared the mother of S——, who informed him that her daughter was not dead after all, but would shortly be in Paris.

“This sort of resurrection was as joyful a piece of news as the first had been overwhelming; it gave me such a surprising turn that I think, were it possible to die of sorrow, or of joy, I had had in a short time enough to finish me off. But I was reserved for other adventures.”



The fair, but fickle S—— and her mother, however, were but duping the poor young fellow, for there was bigger game afoot than an impecunious young foreigner, over head and ears in debt, who could not keep his fingers away from cards.

At a mutual acquaintance's he met a Madame de R——, a friend of S——'s, who—

“Hated her husband more than a woman of sixteen generally does a husband over sixty. I had seen her before, but she was so young that I had not noticed her much. Happy had I always regarded her with equal indifference! But when we met again after her marriage, her beauty, her well-bred air, her fine manners, made a deep impression upon me. They set me to play at *berlan* with her and another lady, and all through the game she did nothing but tease me about my love for S——, insinuating several times that that young lady did not deserve the affection I had for her.

“As I did not know whither all this talk was tending, when the game was over I followed the lady into the recess of a window, where I begged her to speak plainly. For a long time she demurred, excusing herself under the pretext that she should be obliged to give me painful news. All this dallying made me only more and more wishful to know what it might be, and I pressed her so that, at last, she agreed to enlighten me somewhat.

“‘You insist upon knowing?’ said she. ‘Very well, then, I must satisfy you. But blame yourself only if I tell you things which will cause you mortal grief, for I know your temperament, and I am aware that you love her. You imagine,’ she continued, ‘that S—— is in the country. You have been deceived; she is in Paris, and has never left it. She loves the Marquis de V—— as much as he loves her; she sees no one but him, for two months she has never left the Faubourg St. Antoine, where she went to stay when she heard that you were arriving. She did not wish to lay herself open to your reproaches, and, as she hoped you would

forget her, she had you told that she was dead. But, when she heard that you were giving way to grief, she was sorry for you, and had you told that she was still alive, and that she would shortly return to Paris. Indeed, you will see her very soon, but it will only be to receive your dismissal and to hear from her that she prefers V——. I know all this through one of my lady's-maids, whose sister is in Mademoiselle de S——'s service. As for me, since I have married M. de R——, it is no longer suitable for me to know her. You had better give her up; you will find better than she!'

"As she said these last words, she glanced at me and blushed instantly. I wished to reply, but she left me brusquely, and carefully avoided me for the rest of the evening.

"I returned home with my mind cruelly agitated; hatred, love, vengeance, scorn—in one word, all the passions of a lover, despised on one side and flattered on the other, played their part. Imagine the state I was in, a prey to such conflicting emotions. At last scorn triumphed over my love for S——. The *beaux yeux* of Madame de R—— made me forget my fickle fair.

"But I soon perceived that I had been only cured of one mad passion to fall into another of the same kind. The last words of R—— seemed very flattering, and I really thought that she was not indifferent to me. I soothed myself with these pleasing ideas and found an immense delight in entangling myself. But soon I became quite as much the dupe of this new conquest as of the former one. Madame de R—— was one of the most beautiful of women, and without doubt one of the most coquettish in Paris, capricious into the bargain, and more selfish than most women of that sort generally are; but she wished to be loved, and I went headlong into this new entanglement, and for some time I thought myself the happiest man in the world. My friends were as deceived as I was, and for a long time they thought me the only favoured one."

But these "silly pleasures," as Pöllnitz calls them from the point of view of more mature years, did not prevent him seeking the furtherance of the plan he had at heart. Soon after his return to Paris he went to Versailles, and paid his respects to the King, the Princes, and "Madame."

He found the old lady had felt very much the death of her aunt the Electress, though she wrote that "now she is free from all pain, and, as we are bound to believe as Christians, in possession of the Beatific Vision." She had grown more shut up in herself, no longer on such terms of friendship with the King, which she attributed to the "old toad's" influence, quoting with reference to Madame de Maintenon "the German proverb which says that, if the devil cannot go to a place himself he sends an old woman; the truth of this is patent to all us members of the Royal Family."

Madame was sad and lonely. To her sister Louise she wrote about this time :

"I live in this Court like a hermit. . . . I never play, I never remain in the drawing-room where all assemble. . . . I am all the time in my rooms—where I read and write; my only joy, and my only consolation, consisted in writing to my Aunt the Electress, and that day is over. Think what my life is now !"

A little later :

"I live as though I were quite alone in the world. I shall never see my daughter again. My son is absorbed in his own family, and only comes to see me when others are by, or when I have many letters to write. He comes then, so as to avoid seeing me in private. But I am resigned to this state of things. I allow him and his family to act according to their fancy, and I meddle in nothing. I go to visit his wife and daughter as though they were foreign princesses."

Again :

“ After dinner I walked about my room for half an hour, amused myself with my pets, for I have here with me two parrots, a canary, and eight little dogs.”

The unexpected reappearance of her young “ landsmann ” must have cheered the old lady, distressed by the dissipated doings of her son and her granddaughter. He brought her gossip of foreign Courts, and amused her with his stories.

“ She received me,” he writes, “ with such strong marks of kindness that I thought I could count on her support. I told her of the design I had of asking His Majesty for employment. I begged her kindly to recommend me. She promised to do so, and she kept her word ; not only did she speak herself, but she also made the Duc d’Orléans speak to M. Voisin, Chancellor and Minister of War.”

The latter promised to think of posting Pöllnitz, whom Madame had presented to him by one of his officers.

“ He received me with the gruffest air I have seen. He was buried in an immense wig, which prevented him seeing or hearing, which moreover was not unnatural to him. He only listened to me, moreover, out of respect for Madame. He told me that the King had made a large reduction in his army, and was about to make another, that he saw no hope of any opening for me.”

This reply was so different to the promise that he had given to Madame and the Duke that Pöllnitz reported it to them, and the Duke replied : “ ‘ That’s nothing. I’ll speak to him yet again, and I am sure that you will be satisfied.’ He did indeed speak again, but Voisin did no more, no less.”



However, Pöllnitz was grateful to Madame and to the Duke, and continued to be very assiduous in his attentions to them, with which they seemed pleased.

The recent death of the Duc de Berri had completely altered the Duke of Orleans's position. As the nearest male relative, he was now assured of the Regency when the little Dauphin Louis should succeed his aged and failing great-grandfather. But this probability was as yet hardly realized. Pöllnitz often went to the Duke's *coucher*, "but his Court was not numerous then, and, except those of his own household, I was very often the only one there. . . . Few people treated the Duke as the rising sun, the respect they had for the King attached all his courtiers to him ; a reign so long and so glorious seemed to them as if it would never end."

When the mourning for the Duc de Berri was over came a recrudescence of spectacles and amusements for some distinguished visitors to Paris. The entry of the Persian ambassador "was most splendid," and so was his reception by the King, though Pöllnitz thought that the ambassador himself made "a pitiable show": poor coaches, wretched horses, badly dressed servants ; "nor were the presents he brought worthy of him who sent, or him who received them."

Out of curiosity people crowded to Charenton, where the ambassador was lodged, and Pöllnitz went with a friend. The interpreter told them that one of them must make him a polite speech, and so they drew lots with bits of straw as to which it was to be. It fell to Pöllnitz to make a short harangue, to which the ambassador replied ; but, upon further questions, they discovered that he had never even been to Ispahan or seen the Grand Sophy, his master. He regaled them on coffee and sweetmeats.

With regard to ceremonial, he was not amenable, giving the Baron de Breteuil, who had been put in charge of him, much trouble, because he refused to comply with the usual etiquette observed by all who had an audience of the King. Never had Pöllnitz

“seen such a concourse as watched his procession, a crowd from the first gate of the Faubourg S. Antoine to the Hôtel des Ambassadeurs; there were stages erected on either side, full of people,” and a crowd followed him when he went to the bath, or for a walk, and people were so inquisitive that he could hardly get along.

Pöllnitz was present at the grand reception the King gave him in the Grande Galerie at Versailles: Louis, on his high throne, all embroidered in gold, wearing brown velvet and millions of livres of jewels; by his side the little Dauphin, in cloth of gold and pearls and diamonds; the Duke of Orleans on the left, in blue velvet with gold *point d’Espagne* lace, sewn with pearls and diamonds; all the Princes of the Blood of all ages, and all the royal ladies, surrounding the King. On tiers of seats to the right were ladies, on the garden side of the gallery gentlemen, all gorgeously dressed. Priceless carpets strewed the gallery down to the marble staircase; the courtyards were filled with Guards, French and Swiss, Bodyguard, musketeers, and the Household, in order of battle. But, alas! the appearance of the troops was unluckily spoilt by a downpour all day.

The object of this magnificent spectacle brought but poor presents with him, considering “that they were sent by the most powerful monarch in Asia”: some turquoises, a sword studded with jewels, a box of scent which he said was very delicious. All the time he stayed in Paris he was the guest of the Court. At first he used the King’s horses, “but, as he stayed so long, and, moreover, as he ruined them all, they only let him have them on hire.” After a while he came to the opera, where the amphitheatre had been specially prepared for him and his suite. “Here he smoked at his ease, in spite of there being a distinguished company present.”

With another distinguished visitor to Paris Pöllnitz was already acquainted. The Electoral Prince of Saxony

“came incognito, and was presented to the King by Madame as a German guest of good family.” He gave a magnificent ball at the Hôtel de Soissons, crowded with masqueraders, and Pöllnitz, who went to it, had an amusing adventure. Again his mysterious initials are provoking. For R—— may we read the “little Duc de Richelieu, the *archidébauché*,” Madame calls him, “believing neither in God, nor his word . . . ugly little toad, and far from agreeable in manner . . . all the ladies in love with him”? He was only twenty.

To the ball came one whom Pöllnitz describes only as the Duchesse, who had been madly in love with R——, who had deserted her for Madame de S——. She saw R—— enter the ballroom with V——, his intimate friend, who had acted as their go-between.

“The Duchesse was masked, but was instantly recognized by her faithless swain; she attempted to waylay him, but he cleverly managed to escape in the crowd, with his friend. Fearing the Duchesse’s reproaches, he decided to change his domino. V—— also changed; he took the one I had, and gave me his. R—— showed me the spot where he had seen the Duchesse and begged me to pass before her but not to answer her if she wished to talk to me. I promised everything he wished, but I was determined to talk if occasion offered. This soon occurred.

“I must tell you that I was very like M. de V—— in figure, so that the Duchesse took me for him without a moment’s hesitation. She drew me aside, and, still very annoyed that R—— had not wished to speak to her, made me a general disclosure of their intrigue. While she was thus in full swing of making me different confessions which I thought she might be sorry for when she knew to whom she was speaking, I interrupted her by saying that I was not V——.

“‘What’s the use of this nonsense?’ she replied, bluntly. ‘Hear me to the end; this is no time for

joking. You know,' she went on, 'that I granted everything to the ungrateful fellow!'

"I interrupted her again.

"*'Ma foi!'* Madame! I did not know a word of all that!'

"She laughed at me for pretending to be ignorant of what she said, and continued to talk to me with a clearness and candour one rarely finds in those sort of recitals.

"After saying a great deal she added: 'Well, what do you say now? Speak; exculpate your friend to me!'

"*'I think,'* I replied, 'that R—— is a wretch not to value as he should the kindness you show him; far from exculpating him to you, I intend to take him to task. I shall repeat to him all you have done me the honour to tell me to-night. I am certain, though I am not V——, nor a particular friend of R——'s, that he will give heed to what I have to say.'

"*'Why, Monsieur,'* replied the Duchesse, 'why disguise your voice? Why deny who you are? What have I done that I should be treated like this?'

"*'Ma foi!'* I said to her. 'I am not imposing on you. See for yourself!' and, so saying, I took off my mask.

"I cannot tell you how great was the Lady's astonishment. She remained speechless, and, in her confusion at having made such a frank confession as she had just given me, she hesitated as to whether to speak to me or to withdraw.

"Her state of mind made me feel quite sorry for her, and I did all I could to reassure her. I begged her to be convinced that I should maintain an inviolable silence as to what she had said, and that I felt quite as much as she did how important it was not to divulge news of that kind. The good lady gradually began to be more easy, and after that we had talked together for rather a long time, she begged me to give her my hand, and to find her her coach. It was impossible to



discover either her coach, or mine, so she decided to get into a hackney carriage. I escorted her to her hotel; she begged me to be kind enough to go back to the ball, and to tell the ladies I had seen her with that she was not feeling well. I carried out her orders exactly, and I did not fail to call upon her next day. This visit led to others, which gave me an opportunity of forming rather an intimate acquaintanceship. I had the honour of being very much her friend, and I have found her to possess many accomplishments which made her the best company in the world.

“What was so amusing in this adventure was that R—— had a furious quarrel with the Duchesse for having had such a long conversation at the ball with a mask. He made believe that he was jealous, and wrote to her a scathing letter next day, in which he gave her to understand that he broke with her utterly.

“On the other hand, Madame de R——, with whom I had come to the ball, and with whom I was still madly in love, made use of the conversation I had had with the Duchesse to make believe to be jealous (I have since discovered that she was not really so). She exaggerated the sorrow such a long conversation had given her. I was fool enough to believe that she was speaking truthfully, and, further, to be delighted to have made her jealous. I reassured her as to her doubts, in that I said everything a lover says who is really in love, and who wishes to convince his beloved. She seemed satisfied with my protestations; but, however, instead of responding to the feelings I had for her, she continued to annoy me all the rest of the winter. Her very coquettish behaviour aggrieved me, and moreover I did not like to meet the Marquis de V—— so often at her house.

“For a long time I had owed this Marquis a grudge; it was he who had taken S—— from me, and no sooner was I in Madame de R——’s good graces than he found a way of insinuating himself into them. I was so annoyed at finding him always at my heels that I picked

a quarrel with him one day at C——, where we met at the President de Novion's. We had already come to blows, when Madame de C—— came and separated us. V—— assured me that he had no intentions with regard to Madame de R——; he promised me that he would leave off visiting her if I wished it. He did indeed keep his word, and I was very pleased with him; but not so Madame de R——. I quite saw that I was being deceived. Every day I discovered fresh grounds for suspecting her; but, in spite of it all, I hugged the fetters with which she enslaved me, and in so doing I belied the opinion of those who affirm that one loves but once. Yet I should have reflected over this new passion, for it was quite ruinous to me.

“Madame de R—— loved extravagance, and, to succeed with her, one had to make a lavish outlay. To keep myself afloat I borrowed money hither and thither, and soon I found it impossible to find any one to lend me any; on the contrary, my creditors began to pay me frequent visits. Weary of the constant remittances I doled out to them, they decided to have the law of me, and at last they obtained a warrant for my arrest.

“I was much upset by the news, and, in order to avoid their wrath, I thought it best to keep my room for a few days, till M. de Novion had got for me an injunction of arrest. I began to breathe freely again, and at the same time I considered means of raising money. I knew the difficulty there was of drawing from home a sum large enough to satisfy them; all my property was entailed on my brother and Mademoiselle de Pöllnitz, who had no intention of giving her consent to any security on my estates.

“However, as this was the only means of getting out of the difficulty, I set my friends to work to influence her. They served me so well that at last she agreed to give her consent; the loans were negotiated and I got out of my plight happily. The trouble I had been in made me wiser; I curtailed my expenditure. I perceived that this was not the way to retain Madame

R——'s good graces ; but what was to be done ? To plunge into debt again, to risk having another bad business on my hands—I could not make up my mind to that. At the same time I obtained a pension of two thousand livres, but, as for an appointment, it was impossible to wring that out of the War Minister."

Pöllnitz was so disgusted at his want of success that, in spite of his devotion to Paris and to Madame de R——, he determined to try his luck at obtaining a commission in the army elsewhere. Hanover, Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Berlin and Paris again, all had been drawn blank. There remained the Imperial service. He wrote to the Prince de H——, in one of the Emperor's Guards, and colonel of an infantry regiment, and, as such, entitled to distribute the commissions in it. He replied most obligingly that he would be delighted to take Pöllnitz into his regiment, but that, unluckily, the only vacancy in it was that caused by the projected retirement of an old captain who would sell his company for two thousand crowns. "To find the two thousand crowns was, in the plight I was now in, like finding the philosopher's stone."

Pöllnitz made up his mind to try what verbal persuasion would effect with the aged warrior, and he hied him to Bruges, where the Prince de H—— was quartered with his regiment. But he found the captain adamant ; it must be money, or old silver plate. Prince H——, really well disposed to Pöllnitz, and who knew how his affairs stood, wrote to Charlotte Henrietta to induce her to consent to a fresh loan. Pöllnitz also wrote himself.

But all these efforts were of no avail. Fräulein von Pöllnitz sent answers "full of wit, in which she described me very frankly, and was clever enough to persuade the Prince that he might as well arm a lunatic as give me leave to borrow more money."

So Pöllnitz left the company to which he had been temporarily attached pending his buying it, and quitted

Bruges, vowing it "one of the dullest places to stay in for a man who is not a merchant." In describing it he incidentally mentions that "Charles II sought refuge there when his subjects rebelled against him, and he was so well received that, when he was peacefully on his throne, he showed his gratitude by allowing the Brugeois to come annually with fifty vessels to the herring fishery off the English coast."

With the Prince and Princess de H—— the Baron went to Nieuport, where the former's regiment had a detachment, and inspected the field where his great ancestor, Maurice of Orange, had won a notable victory over the Spanish. Thence, with the Dutch Governor, the Prince of Holstein, he went on to Ypres, a frontier garrison of the Dutch, and then drove to Lille, and back to Paris.



## CHAPTER IX

WHEN Pöllnitz returned to Paris he once more came across the enemy of his boyhood, whose olive-branch he had recently found himself obliged to decline. Countess Wartenberg had betaken herself to Paris, and was figuring there as The Lady of the Diamonds, because her gems were so many and so large. Pöllnitz relates the story of her latest adventures, which were convulsing Paris.

“ She had followed the Chevalier de B—— to Paris, and he had given her a signed promise of marriage, at Utrecht, where it will be remembered that she had fallen in love with him during the Congress. At Versailles, where she had the honour of paying her respects to the King, she appeared wearing a bracelet with the portraits of three monarchs. This she showed to the King, and informed him that, after having had three Kings at her feet, she came from the depths of Germany to throw herself at his. This compliment surprised the King; he looked at her, but made no reply. A few days later she appeared at the theatre all bristling with diamonds. The gilded youth of society plotted to pull some off, and every cadet of good family fancied that diamonds would become him quite as well as the Countess. A few were indeed filched from her, which caused her to be a little more reserved in her parade of them. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the care she took of them, the Chevalier de B—— cleverly managed one day to remove them all from her. It was at the time when he was considering the withdrawal of the contract of marriage which he had signed ;

his family were pressing him to extricate himself. But, not knowing how to set about retrieving of a promise which the lady declined to give up, he made use of a rather uncommon expedient.

“One day, when he was at Versailles, he took post-horses and came to Madame de Wartenberg. He said that the King had just received a courier from Berlin, by whom the King of Prussia begged him to arrest her and seize her diamonds and other effects, as they had been stolen from the King, his father.

“‘I have just been informed about this,’ said the Chevalier, ‘by M. de T——, who, knowing how interested I am in all that concerns you, wished to give me a chance of being useful to you, in protecting you from the misfortune with which you are threatened.’

“The Countess was startled by this news. With much emotion she exclaimed to the Chevalier: ‘*Eh! Mon Dieu!* What shall we do?’

“‘You must entrust me with your diamonds,’ he replied; ‘your interests and mine are the same. I do not think that you suspect me, and I will take them to my father, where they will be safe. Moreover, do not be uneasy about yourself. For M. de T—— says that they are only after your valuables, and will not arrest you.’

“Madame de Wartenberg believed all this, and, taking the Chevalier for her guardian angel, she handed him over all her diamonds and everything precious she possessed. B—— went off with the booty. The Countess thought she had done a good stroke in thus placing her valuables in safety, but ere long she saw that she had acted foolishly.

“For three or four days B—— did not appear. The Countess was surprised at his absence, and wrote him note after note without receiving a single reply. At last, on the fifth day, B—— came and somewhat reassured the good lady. He told her that her jewels

were in safety, and that she could have them when she liked, on one small condition, which was to return him the marriage promise he had given her. The Countess was extremely surprised at this compliment, and told him that a Countess of the Empire was not to be treated in this guise, and that she had come to Paris because he had given her his word that he would marry her, and that she could easily force him to do so.

“B——, who had made up his mind to break with her at any price, told her that she was free to choose one of the two offers he made, which were, either to go to law, in which case she would infallibly lose her jewels, or, to recover them by returning to him the paper he asked for.

“He demonstrated that, by a law-suit, he hoped easily to win, as much on account of the justice of his case as by his parents’ great influence, and that, as to the jewels, as there had been no witnesses when she handed them over to him, he should take a bold line with her and deny that he had ever received them; yet, that he should sell a part of them in order to be able to go to law.

“The Countess, perceiving that the Chevalier was a man likely to act as he said, and that she had nothing to gain, decided to return the promise of marriage. B—— at once brought back her diamonds, and this good faith on his part prompted Madame de Wartemberg to make him a present of a ring, valued at twenty thousand livres. Thus ended her intimacy with B——.

“The Countess, in order to console herself for the loss of one lover, decided to have others; but she was not happy in her different choices. They were all unreliable people, she said, mostly rather thievish; in short, she gave up all intercourse with the French, thinking them too clever for her, and fell to praising Germans in such matters, saying they were the best in the world.

“However, she soon had experience to the contrary,

and at her own expense. Having made the acquaintance of a fine, handsome young Teuton, they promised each other to get married directly they found themselves in a Protestant country. A contract was soon signed. The cavalier thought that, after the signature, the nuptial benediction was quite an unnecessary ceremony in order to enter into community of goods, and that his rights began directly the conditions were signed. On this principle he thought well to carry off all his future spouse's jewels. He left Paris, and set out to reach Lorraine.

“The Countess was soon informed of his departure. Her lover's perfidy caused her a mortal anguish, but the danger her diamonds were in went most to her heart. Happily she knew the road her lover had taken, and sent after him. He was found at Meaux, where he had imprudently halted, and was brought back to Paris, where the Countess, denying any contract of marriage with this young man, was ready to get him into trouble. The Electoral Prince of Saxony, however, under whose protection the young fellow was, stopped all the proceedings against him, and had the jewels returned to Madame de Wartenberg. She did not insist on the performance of the promise of marriage made by this last lover, for, not being of a nature to remain long idle, she had already contracted a secret alliance with F——. These different little affairs, however, following so quickly one upon the other, made so much talk that the Countess thought it as well not to make a longer stay in Paris, and went back to Holland.”

Pöllnitz was in Paris at the time of the death of Louis XIV, of which he gives a description. He says, however, that Madame de Maintenon returned to the King's death-bed, which she had left when he fell into a deep stupor, from which it was thought he would not revive, and tells us that she was present at the end. As Pöllnitz was unbiased, being of the opposite camp



to "the old woman," his testimony may remove an aspersion of heartlessness which her enemies have cast upon her.

He was struck by the promptitude with which the courtiers, directly the breath was out of Louis's body, flung themselves at the feet of the Duke of Orleans, "as the only fountain of favours," though the colleagues with whom Louis's will had provided the Duke "had tied his hands in such fashion as to leave him only a shadow of the Regency." Time showed, however, that he was clever enough to hold his own, and to go his own way.

There were many changes in court life. After the Lit de Justice inaugurating the new reign, at which Philip d'Orléans asserted himself so masterfully, the baby King returned to Vincennes, where he had lived during his great-grandfather's lifetime, till the Tuileries was ready for him. The Regent and the Royal Princes returned to Paris, and to their own hotels. The Regent lived at the Palais Royal, Madame with him, and the Luxembourg Palace was given to the widowed Duchesse de Berri, the Regent's favourite child, who immediately set up great state. She demanded a captain of guards. Hitherto only the Queen had had this privilege. Madame, hearing of it, promptly appointed Captain von Hartwig, her Captain of Guards. She loved to have Germans about her, and he was the son of her old governess, and had been her page as a boy. Moreover, in spite of the Duchess's pretensions to it, she insisted on retaining her old title of plain "Madame," and the daughter-in-law and granddaughter had to add their own titles to the "Madame." The headstrong young Duchess, "the best Princess in the world," Pöllnitz calls her, "so accessible, also had herself preceded by cymbals and trumpets when in state." But she was no stickler on ceremony with most of the ladies, allowing them to come to her in scarves, for she did not care about dressing herself. Madame, on the other hand, was more particular. She always wore court dress and never allowed

any one except old or invalid ladies to visit her in anything else.

The Regent introduced many changes in administration and taxation, which, especially the tax on *gens d'affaires*, made him very unpopular. People began to regret the old King, and the Regent knew it. "I was one day at Madame's," writes Pöllnitz, "when the Prince said, out loud: 'Six months ago I was adored in Paris; to-day I am hated. I should very much like to know why.'"

Another reason was the restriction of currency, and the introduction of a paper-money system, the Billets d'État. Moreover, there was no method or stability at the Palais Royal. The good-natured Regent promised everything to everybody, but rarely kept his word. He was naturally disinclined to business, hurrying through affairs in the mornings, that he might have the late afternoons and the nights free for his saturnalia. Cardinal Dubois, "the confounded priest, the evil toad, the greatest liar and impostor in Paris" (Madame never forgave him for arranging her son's marriage), really governed France and the Regent.

By a side-wind, these financial reforms, by means of which the Regent was striving to pay for the extravagance and the debts of the late King, affected poor Pöllnitz, though he was in the Regent's favour. For pensions granted by the late King were suppressed, and among them that of Pöllnitz—

"Which I had had such difficulty in obtaining. . . . I made several efforts to re-establish myself. But all that I could obtain was that my pension should soon be restored to me. That promise has yet to be fulfilled! The withdrawal of pensions, added to the large reductions made in the army, reduced many people to beggary. At that time I saw Knights of St. Louis waiting till dusk in order to ask for alms in the public square. From this extreme misery ensued, as may well be imagined, robberies and murders, so that all that time Paris was rather like a wood. Dread of sharing the common

impecuniosity led me to be more assiduous than ever with Madame."

Despite her new position as mother of the Regent, much sought after, the old lady was depressed and grumbling.

"Every day," she wrote, "brings me a flood of bores who are a veritable plague; each one wishes me to intercede in his favour. When I am at table I am surrounded by a hundred faces, and I have to talk whether I am grave or gay. All through the day people come and disturb me at my reading or writing, and I am forced to entertain them. This lasts till eight in the evening; in short, I am pestered and vexed."

Pöllnitz implored her very urgently to use her interest with the Regent on his behalf. But to him she answered, as to the rest, that her son discouraged any interference, that she was powerless. However—

"She told me that I need not be uneasy, because it was not necessary for her to speak to the Prince, her son, about me, as he was naturally inclined to favour me; but that, at present, he was so overwhelmed with business and requests that I really must have patience, and wait some time yet. I replied that I would willingly wait as long as His Royal Highness pleased, but that I feared very much that I should not be in a position to wait long. Madame replied:

"'There is a cure for everything. Be present in my study to-morrow, when my dinner is over.'

"I obeyed her order punctually. I found her alone; when she saw me she said: 'I am a poor widow who cannot do much good, but I mean to please you.'

"Then she ordered me to open a desk of which she gave me the key, and to take out of it a bag which was in a corner, and in which there were more than a thou-

sand livres in gold. I thanked her with all possible gratitude, and this new proof of kindness attached me to Her Royal Highness more than ever."

But if Madame did not interfere with her son, she continued to criticize the behaviour of her flighty granddaughter quite as sharply as in the days when the old King was wont to call her in to his aid to lecture the headstrong Duchesse de Berri. If Madame demanded to the last iota what was due to her own rank, she conceded as much to those to whom it was due.

"I heard her once speak very sharply on this subject to Madame la Duchesse de Berri," chronicles Pöllnitz, "and in truth no one but Madame would have taken this tone with this Princess. Madame de Berri came one evening to Madame in a scarf (head unpowdered and undressed). When she had been there half an hour she asked her lady, Madame de Mouchy, the time. Madame asked why she was inquiring of Madame de Mouchy. Madame de Berri replied that she was going to the Tuileries, and wished to know the time.

" 'What? To the Tuileries?' said Madame. 'Are you going to walk about by torchlight?'

" 'No, Madame,' said Madame de Berri, 'I'm going to see the King.'

" 'The King?' said Madame. 'Please allow me to tell you how surprised I am! To the King, Madame, dressed like that? I think you must know too well what is due to him. Do not do such a thing, Madame, I beg you. Render to the King the respect you owe him, and then you will be able to demand that every one shall render you what is due to you.'

" Madame de Berri, not pleased, wanted to reply. Madame interrupted her.

" 'No, Madame, nothing can excuse you; you can at least dress, on the rare occasions you go to the King, as I dress every day—I, who am your grandmother. Say frankly, it is laziness prevents you doing what is



in keeping with your age and rank. A princess should be dressed as a princess ; a soubrette as a soubrette.'

"Madame de Berri, unaccustomed to receive such scoldings, was very much taken aback by this lecture. She then did what she was in the habit of doing when anything displeased her, and good manners did not allow of her showing haughtiness ; she rose, made a deep curtsey, and went out.

"Madame began writing again while going on talking on the same subject, and still with some heat. She said, looking at all those who were present : ' But am I wrong in speaking thus to the Duchesse de Berri ? What do you say ? '

"You can imagine that every one kept a solemn silence, and, as she went on talking in the same way, it was very embarrassing for all those who were in the study. But Madame the Princesse de Conti came in, which changed the conversation."

Poor old Madame ! She was straining at a gnat. She, against whose moral character slander had never breathed a word, was lecturing, on a trivial breach of etiquette, a granddaughter whose notorious profligacy was a byword in Paris, the theme of the lampooners of the day. What a sidelight on the eighteenth century worship of " the divinity that doth hedge a King " !

To much the same point of view as that of Madame were due the wrangles between the Dukes and the Peers and the Parliament over precedence and etiquette, which sent some of the nobility to the Bastille ; likewise the limiting the precedence of the Legitimized Princes of the Blood to their lifetime, though Louis had made it hereditary and even granted right of succession to the Crown. Feeling ran high at Court, which was rent in parties over these questions.

Then there came the disastrous expedition of the Chevalier de St. Georges to Scotland. Pöllnitz attributes James's failure to his intolerance, which alienated the Scottish Protestants who had joined him in great

numbers. He mentions that he heard that one day, in Scotland, he got up from dinner because an Anglican cleric had said grace! Pöllnitz was present when a report of this was made to the Regent. “‘If that is all true,’ he replied, ‘it is not surprising that he has not succeeded, and I consider him a lost Prince.’”

“At the same time,” writes Pöllnitz, “I noticed on his face and on that of Madame’s a certain expression of satisfaction, which showed that that day they were pleased that the Elector of Hanover had become even more firmly seated upon the throne of England.” Louis had supported James II and his son, and had intended, eventually, to have the Crown restored to them. But the Regent, in this, as in other matters, reversed his uncle’s policy.

The Chevalier, on his return, passed through France incognito, and took refuge at Avignon. The Regent, though he did not yield to pressure from England, and arrest him, broke the English and Irish officers in his service who had followed James to Scotland.

In Paris Pöllnitz found there was great pity felt for Mary of Modena, the Queen-mother—

“Who had ruined some of her friends who had made great efforts to meet the expenses of the ill-starred expedition. . . . Though the House of Orleans was not very sympathetic over the misfortunes of the Chevalier de St. Georges, it did not deter Madame from going to Chaillot to condole with the Queen over her fresh misfortunes. I was at the Palais-Royal when Madame returned from this visit, and she honoured me by telling me that she had just wept copiously. I pretended not to be aware of the cause of her tears, and I took the liberty of asking her what could have troubled her.

“‘The poor Queen of England,’ she said to me, ‘has just made me feel very sorry for her. I have just wept with her.’”

“I could not help showing to Madame how surprised I was over this grief, fancying that she was more inter-

ested in the House that ruled England than in a Prince who was no relation to her, and, moreover, used to misfortune.

“ ‘ You are right,’ Madame replied to me, ‘ all those who belong to my late aunt are dear to me, and I wish them well. But this poor Queen is so upset it seems as if she were even now losing the Crown of England. What can be done ? She must, indeed, console herself ; her destiny is not to be happy, and, if any one is to be unfortunate, I would rather it were she than the King of England. But one must not say so.’

“ Madame de Berri having come in a moment after, Madame told her that she had been to see the Queen of England, and that she might as well have been to see the nymph Arethusa.

“ Madame la Duchesse replied that it was not surprising to see people in such grief as the Queen weeping.

“ ‘ Well,’ replied Madame, ‘ after thirty years of misfortune one ought to be used to it ! ’

“ And thus the Princess dried the tears she had just so abundantly shed.”

When the summer came Madame left Paris, which she always disliked, saying the smoke made her feel ill, for S. Cloud, which she loved—“ the most beautiful grounds ”—taking with her her step-granddaughters. Pölnitz often went out to S. Cloud to her.

“ I spoke to her of my position and implored her to intercede for me with the Duke, her son. She always promised me, and never did so, yet she told every one who spoke of me that she was well inclined towards me. On the other hand Madame, who actually disliked a Prussian nobleman named S——, pleaded his cause vigorously with M. le Duc, her son, in order that he might do something for him. When M. le Duc had gone out she called to me, saying : ‘ You heard the interest I took in S——, yet I assure you that he does not deserve it.’ She then said the most astonishing things against





LOUIS XV.

From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.





S——. I took the liberty of defending him, and of assuring Her Royal Highness that she had been given false reports about him.

“ ‘What!’ said Madame, ‘dare you deny that he had his wrist cut off for having forged the signature of the King of Denmark?’ ”

“As I knew the story of S—— at the Court of Denmark, and that there was no question of anything of that kind, and that, moreover, I knew that he had lost his arm from a fall he had had, I represented to Madame that they thought it sufficient to cut off S——’s wrist for the crime she suspected him of, yet he had lost his arm at the shoulder.

“ ‘Ah!’ said the Princess to me, ‘that is because it was cut off twice!’ ”

“ ‘But, Madame,’ I replied at once, ‘Your Royal Highness would not patronize a man capable of such a deceit?’ ”

“ ‘I have reasons for that,’ she replied, and I dared not push my curiosity any further. But, in the end, M. de S——, extremely disliked, obtained what he wanted, whilst, as for me, to whom they were all well inclined, it was impossible for me to get a definite refusal, which, at least, would have made me give up all hopes, and turn my attention elsewhere.”

The Duchesse de Berri was now also in *villeggiatura*. “The model of every vice, barring avarice,” as the Duc de St. Simon, her father’s great friend, writes of her, she had but changed the scene of her shameless doings from the Luxembourg palace to a château at Meudon. Here she revelled with her lover, squandering an income of seven hundred thousand livres, kept eight hundred servants, and gave entertainments at which thirty-one soups were served, and one hundred and twenty side-dishes. “She is such a glutton,” writes her grandmother. “Every night she sits down to table at nine and eats till three in the morning. . . . She is sick because she has eaten enormously, and drunk too much brandy.”

She rarely went to bed sober, and gambling was her great amusement. At this time she was but little over twenty !

Her father the Regent refused her nothing, and “ with her patronage one was certain to succeed.”

The Duchess was kind and generous, willing to ask favours, and Pöllnitz neglected no opportunity of paying his respects. The atmosphere at Meudon was more congenial to him than that of S. Cloud, with its elderly mistress, whose righteous soul was vexed every day. “ I am more troubled every day by all I see and hear round me. I wonder that the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah does not descend from Heaven upon France.”

The scandal of the liaison between the Duchess and Riom was at its height. Pöllnitz had known him when, a plain, stout young man—“ toad’s-head,” Madame called him—he was but then a lieutenant in the King’s regiment, in rather poor circumstances. Through his sister, the lady-in-waiting, Riom had been introduced to the Duchess and appointed captain of her guards. Gradually he insinuated himself into the gay young widow’s graces, but without giving himself airs. Pöllnitz always found him as kind and polite as ever to old friends, and willing to help them, being now extremely wealthy and magnificent. The Duchess had given him the command of several regiments, of which he sold the commissions at a good profit.

Nothing throws more light upon the tone and customs of society under the Regency than Pöllnitz’s dissertation, written many years later, upon the lackeys of Paris at that time.

“ They form,” he writes, “ such a large body that many kings have not such a numerous army. Moreover, these people have such extraordinary luck, and often rise so rapidly from valets to masters, and even nobles, that really they should not be confused with the mass of valets in Europe. Those among them who are clever enough to pass as dandies, as many do (among

the liveried folk of Paris are some of the best figures and handsomest faces), those, I say, who are in some young lord's service, are generally the equals and the companions of their masters. There are others who are men *à bonne fortune*, and, if scandal may be believed, and even, perhaps, appearances, there are many high-born ladies who do not always treat them as lackeys or servants. It is true that, for the most part, they keep them in livery, and, in order to have them near their persons, make *valets de chambre* of them. Nothing is too fine for these favourites of Venus; they dress up like princes, and, to see one of these lucky lackeys, you would take him for a distinguished man. It is true that there are some who ape gentlemen to the life, and often have better manners than their masters. An appearance of importance, a look of a lord, is born with a Frenchman. Others enjoy the favour of their young masters in such an unusual fashion that one does not know what to think, and often these noblemen, forgetting what they owe to themselves and their birth, make up supper-parties with their people, at which it seems to me that the pleasure of conversation can have no part. But such is the spirit of debauchery which has taken possession of the greater part of the youth of the Court.

“It is not that the excess of dissipation is to the taste of the nation. On the contrary, a Frenchman is born moral, and he dies moral, lucky if he can escape with four or five years of a hot youth, and overcome the tumult of passions which his great vivacity kindles in his heart, and makes him do things at twenty which he hates and abhors at thirty. I maintain that even the greater part of Frenchmen are not vicious from inclination. The nobleman is infinitely more so than the bulk of the nation; I do not know what it is seduces him—bad company, bad advice; he thinks it fine to be dissolute, and many are more so in word than in deed.

“It does not seem to me that it is the same with



the women (I speak of those who do not strictly adhere to virtuous principles). They always maintain a very correct exterior, which deceives those who do not know them. Their talk is not licentious, and if they do wrong it is only in *tête-à-tête*. It is true that little justice is done to French ladies among us. Many of our young men who return from Paris wishing to pose as dandies, relate such unfavourable stories that most Germans, and especially our ladies, think just the opposite of what they ought to think. Virtue and modesty are found among the fair sex here, as elsewhere, and those dandies who say the opposite often do not know a lady of quality by name, and have never entered an anteroom. Certainly there are women of quality who have lifted their masks, but their number is so small that the fair sex should not be held contaminated by their bad behaviour. I wager that there are ladies here, beautiful, young, and made to charm, whom scandal respects. It seems to me that one can ask for no more. It is the same with young men; the greater number are very dissipated, but there are some who have kept to the paths of virtue. A La Trimouille, Luxembourg, Boufflers, and many others, show an example to our young men, who would perhaps be as worthless as the French youths if they went into society so young, and found themselves in the centre of pleasures and amusements."

Two new comets appeared in the Paris firmament about this time, each to run a short but brilliant career, and to end in tragedy and darkness. From the provinces came the beautiful, spirituelle Adrienne Lecouvreur, to shed a soft radiance which has never been surpassed over the Parisian stage. The other was the hard-headed Scotsman of figures, appearing at the critical moment when the lavish extravagance of the reign of the Grand Monarque seemed about to bear fruit in national bankruptcy. The Regent gave him permission to establish in Paris the first bank, similar to those at London and Amsterdam, and Law shortly afterwards obtained large

grants of land in the newly discovered Louisiana, and floated the Mississippi and the East India Companies.

Meanwhile, the little King, the hope of France, had been taken out of the hands of women and placed in charge of the old Marshal Villeroy, "who taught him not only to walk, but to think as a King."

"I recall," writes Pöllnitz, "an incident which showed that he was quite convinced that he was the only master in his kingdom, and also that there was no one superior to himself. Madame had come to the Tuileries to pay her respects, but only made a short visit, as she was going to hear mass. As she withdrew she said to the King that she was going to see a greater Lord than himself. The little eight-year-old monarch seemed surprised, but, after reflecting for a moment, he replied to Madame: 'Doubtless, Madame, you are going to pray to God.' On another occasion, when the Comédie Française played the tragedy of *Athalie* before His Majesty, it was related that the Prince could hardly endure to see young Joas sitting on the throne; he fancied it was a second King. He would not even applaud the child who acted the part of Joas very well indeed. These incidents showed that he had been inspired by feelings suitable to his dignity, and perhaps he will be equal to his august great-grandfather."

## CHAPTER X

POOR Pöllnitz's private affairs showed no change for the better. In spite of his solicitations, and the Regent's fair promises, he was no further advanced than when he came to France, and had much less money.

“However, the ardent wish that I had to enter the French Army prevented me from being rebuffed, and, though there was little appearance of any success, I began again with my petitions. My sojourn in France was extremely ruinous to me, and those who knew me intimately could not understand how I managed to maintain myself.”

Cousin Charlotte Henrietta soon learnt that her young relative had failed to obtain any appointment in France, but that he was still determined to live there. She grudged all the outlay she knew that he must be making, and, as his property was all entailed on her, “she fancied that all the money that I was spending in France was as good as stolen from her.”

So she determined to have Pöllnitz removed from Paris, knowing that he could live more inexpensively anywhere else. She therefore begged the Princess of Wales, who was one of Madame's numerous correspondents—

“To write to Her Royal Highness and to beg her not to protect me any longer, as I did not deserve her kindness. The letter, a strong one, for my cousin was well served, was written and forwarded to Madame, who, however, told me of its contents, and assured me that

it would not affect her opinion of me, but that she would always continue to be kind to me."

Thanking the Princess very humbly, Pöllnitz withdrew, very angry with his cousin. In his first outburst against her, he wrote her a letter in which he did not spare her. Cousin Charlotte Henrietta, "who had really a very pretty wit, replied in the same strain." Pöllnitz rejoined, and she answered him, and there followed a lively correspondence "in which we each said very pretty things."

"To crown my happiness, I was now attacked by jaundice. This illness brought me to the brink of the grave."

Simultaneously with the growth of infidelity in the early eighteenth century, and with the widespread moral depravity, raged fierce religious feuds between various sects. In Protestant Germany we have seen how the Lutherans and Calvinists hated each other; France was rent between the Jansenists and the Jesuits. It was indeed a war only of the pen, a shock of scholastic lances. But the influence of Jansenism, which was great among the upper classes, was also a healthy one, for they preached and practised austerity and simplicity of life, and endeavoured to bring about a much-needed reform of morals.

When Pöllnitz lay upon a bed of sickness his friends did not neglect him, especially the celebrated Jansenist, the Abbé d'Asfeld. Pöllnitz was too quick and keen in absorbing new ideas to escape the Jansenist influence. The Abbé seized the opportunity of rescuing this brand from the burning. "The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be." The impressionable young man listened to his saintly adviser. D'Asfeld not only brought him back to religion, but also converted him to the Roman Catholic communion.



“ My friends did not neglect me, and, among others, the Abbé d’Asfeld was the one to whom I am most indebted. He begged me to consider my situation seriously, and, as he knew that I was not a Catholic, and that the prejudices in which I had been brought up inclined me very much to the contrary side, he implored me to allow him to talk to me about religion for an hour a day. I gladly assented. Every one knows with what force and unction he speaks. He continued these visits during all my illness, which gradually passed away. I was so much impressed with what he told me that I promised him that I would be instructed directly I had recovered. I kept my word as soon as I was able to go out. He introduced me to Père Denys, a Barefooted Carmelite. A few discussions with the good Father completed what the Abbé had begun, so that, in a short time, I made my public confession of faith before Père Denys in the church of his convent, in the presence of a great number of distinguished people. M. le Marquis d’Asfeld, and the Abbé, his brother, were my witnesses, and signed after me my confession of faith. When the ceremony was over I was attacked on every side by the embraces of a quantity of people, of whom three quarters were unknown to me, but who, out of their zeal for religion, wished to demonstrate to me the joy my reception into the bosom of the Church gave them. I received the Communion the same week, All Saints’ Day. Finally, I went to visit the Cardinal de Noailles, who gave me a very fine address, exhorting me to be firm in the religion I had embraced.”

News of Pöllnitz’s conversion soon spread to Germany. Kind cousin Charlotte did not fail to raise an outcry against this step—

“ As vehemently as Luther or Calvin would have done. The same Princess, who had already recommended me to Madame ” (the Duchess of Hanover, sister-in-law of Electress Sophia ?), “ wrote to tell her that she need not

be surprised at my changing my religion, as I had already done so two or three times before !”

On Madame, however, this last hint made no more impression than the first ; but, in order not to hear any more about his enemies, Pöllnitz ceased to frequent the Palais Royal, whither Madame had returned for the winter. His action entirely disposed of the assertion that he had sold his faith for the sake of worldly advantage.

The winter of 1717 was an unpleasant one for him. Paris, “ without money, is duller than the most remote desert.” He was soon obliged to put down his coach, and next to sell part of his wardrobe, in order to satisfy his most pressing creditors. Yet he could not escape the disgrace with which he was overwhelmed by one “ hungrier than the rest.” In spite of having promised to wait a month, this creditor had Pöllnitz arrested in the little market of the Faubourg S. Germain, and removed to the Abbaye prison.

This might have turned out ill for Pöllnitz had not the Councillor of Parliament, Novion, to whom he at once sent news of his incarceration, come to his aid. Novion himself arrived immediately and offered to be security for the debt. But the creditor, who wanted only money down, refused bail. Whereupon Novion, much annoyed by the refusal, wrote a line to his relative, the First President, asking that Pöllnitz might be set at liberty. This was at once ordered, without the money being paid. Novion, moreover, obtained an injunction of arrest, so that Pöllnitz’s creditors gave him no more trouble. Such was justice in Paris under Louis XV !

But no sooner was our Baron out of one trouble than he landed himself in another, “ less annoying, indeed, but very funny.” Two years previously he had become—

“ Acquainted in the salon of the wife of the President de P—— with a rich, ugly, avaricious, mad old widow, who, to complete her attractions, loved law-suits to

distraction. These great qualities did not deter a number of pleasant men from trying to woo her, aspiring to a marriage which seemed to them advantageous. . . . The lady was forty years older than I was ; patches, rouge, and white, daily renewed her attractions. One had to be twenty-two, like me, not to be scared by her charms. The eight thousand livres' income I had in view induced me, however, to take for natural everything that was artificial, and I do not know that I would not have sworn that my charmer was fifteen.

“For two years we were very attentive to each other. The widow, however, would not make her choice ; not because she did not wish to get married, but because she insisted on such extraordinary conditions that the gallants retired at once.” Madame la Présidente de P——, who knew the lady, and also of Pöllnitz's sad plight, advised him to try his fate, and said she would help him. Her efforts and Pöllnitz's endeavours to please were not in vain. The lady offered him a suite of rooms in her house, and threw out hints that he might have hopes.

The difficulty was Pöllnitz's lack of money ; for he wished to appear at the house well turned out. “Happily my hostess, who was one of those schemers with whom Paris swarms, helped me out of my dilemma.” She saw what was the matter, and, with the assistance of an Italian valet whom he had had for some time, easily provided all he wanted in order to make a fine show. Pöllnitz engaged more servants, set up fine liveries, and in a few days his equipage was as fine as ever, “all on credit, indeed, but soon my old woman, stingy though she was, helped me out of my difficulty.”

On the other hand, Pöllnitz was obliged to play a rather embarrassing rôle, “pretending to be the lover of one of the most disagreeable women in the universe, just when I was still in love with Madame de R——, who was, without a doubt, one of the most beautiful persons you could see.”

Further, the lady, aping people in society, pretended to be jealous. She had Pöllnitz watched everywhere, and he could hardly leave her for a moment.

“Generally we went out together, and at eight in the morning were at the Palais de Justice, irritating lawyers and solicitors. The good lady went home, and began her toilette. I was present in an arm-chair, where I had plenty of time to bore myself. It is true that, for the first few days, I was somewhat amused by the close acquaintance with the means by which a very unpleasant physiognomy can be made passable. Everything about my old woman was artificial, and I do not think that more colours could be used to paint a portrait than were necessary to patch up her face.”

Bored, and horribly disgusted, only the thought of the predicaments into which his extravagance had led him induced Pöllnitz to reflect that it was to his interest not to break off playing the lover's part. At last, when he was nearly dead of boredom, she began to speak of marriage, and he consented.

“The lady had two sons, who might have been my fathers. Messieurs, my step-sons, were warned, I do not know by whom, of the understanding between me and their mother. They came and flung themselves at her feet, imploring her not to do them and their children (they were married) this injury by marrying me. My fiancée was shaken, and I appeared at the moment that she was about to promise her sons what they asked. My presence reassured her, and I induced her to triumph over her weakness.

“But my sons employed means which was far from useless. Their mother was a coquette, but she was also devout. She gave to God the time that she was not with me, or at her toilette. Her sons handed her over to a priest of S. Sulpice. The holy man seized his opportunity when I was not in the house. I had not foreseen the step, or the porter—all the servants were



in my pay—would certainly not have allowed him in. So well did he acquit himself of his mission that he brought about the decision that the signature of the marriage contract, which was to take place next day, should be postponed for three months. I learnt this news without much grief, for I confess that my conceit was such that I did not think the lady could escape me. From the portrait I have drawn you of my charmer, you can well imagine that I was not much in love with her. The scruples which the priest of S. Sulpice had aroused did not change her attitude towards me. We were still good friends, but yet I dared not speak of anything which would settle matters for me. She made me handsome presents, and I disposed of them as fast as I received them. To suggest the drawing up of a will to a sweetheart of sixty-two would have been an odd love-making, and the way to lose all.

“But ill-luck befell me just when I least expected it. One morning I entered my charmer’s chamber to find her at her toilette. She complained of a violent headache, and told me that she was very unwell; that she had asked people to dine, but was not fit to receive them. She begged me to do the honours of the house. I advised her to tell those she had invited that she was ill, and to beg them to put the party off till another day. She agreed. I went out for a turn, promising to come back and dine with her.

“When I returned I found her more made up than usual. She told me that her headache had quite gone after that she had drunk some coffee, and that she had dressed to please me. We dined together; she ate very little, and soon began to complain again. I had her put to bed, and, drawing a chair by her bed-side, took up a book to read her to sleep. All at once I felt my hand seized. I turned towards the bed, and saw my fiancée expire, clasping my hand. I called for help; people came; surgeons, doctors came. They bled her, but all was in vain. ‘Not twice does one stand on the verge of death.’

“This tragedy so shocked me that I did not think of putting my effects in safety. I went to my room, and, hardly had I been there a few moments, when they came and told me that one of the deceased’s sons was there with a police-officer, putting seals on everything. I did not object, and, in truth, I had no right to do so. But my urbanity only made the son most masterful. He even came into my room to seal the things which belonged to me. I told him that, if he did not leave, I would have him put out by my people and those of the deceased, who were very fond of me.

“While this was going on, M. de Novion, the Parliamentary Councillor, who was a great friend of mine, came to see me; he advised me to turn out as soon as possible, and to have everything that belonged to me removed at once. He offered me his house to put my furniture and my baggage in. I accepted his offer, and everything was carried away in a few hours. The sons wished to go to law with me; but, as they had no proof of what I was indebted to their mother, they did not dare to begin to annoy me. Had I been older and wiser, I should have regretted for a long time the loss I had experienced. For, besides a good friend—a rare and precious thing—I lost the prospect of a brilliant future.”

There was nothing for it now but for Pöllnitz to go to Berlin and to try and arrange his affairs by selling his estates, if his cousin allowed him. He delayed his departure a while to be in Paris during the visit of the Czar, which made a great stir, though Peter declined to receive a public entry. He only reached the Louvre, chronicles Pöllnitz, at ten at night, not too pleased not to be welcomed by the King, and to be told that the latter was too young to sit up so late. He was very cross all the evening, declined any supper, and only took a glass of beer. He refused to stay at the Louvre, saying that the furniture of his rooms was too magnificent, and that his people, who were slovenly, might spoil it. At one in the morning he turned out of it. The Marshal

de Tessé, who had been attached to him during his stay, had luckily furnished the Hôtel de Lesdiguières; but even that was too sumptuous, and the Czar would not sleep in the fine bed he had prepared, but had a camp-bed put up in a dressing-room.

Next day he received a visit from the Regent, and then the King came in state to see him. The Czar received little Louis as he descended from his coach, and took him in his arms, with an ecstasy of affection which seemed to surprise the child somewhat. The latter made a speech of welcome, and the two passed, hand in hand, into the audience-chamber. The visit only lasted a very short time. When the King took his leave the Czar, at the coach-door, lifted him up in his arms, higher than himself, saying that he wished for him that his grandeur and power might surpass that of the King Louis XIV.

Next day the Czar returned the visit, and was very much pleased with the state and ceremonial of his reception. Later he paid visits to the Regent and to Madame. The latter talked to him for two hours in her favourite German, and he replied to her in Dutch. When he had taken his leave, he remarked to M. de S—— that the old lady was extraordinarily inquisitive, and had asked him too many questions; but that, in the end, he had not told her anything he did not wish her to know.

The Czar saw the sights of Paris with the insatiable curiosity and the indefatigableness of a modern American, starting at dawn and wearing out many of poor M. de Tessé's coach-horses, which he used in order to pass unnoticed. The Court spared no pains to entertain him. A grand review was held of all the King's regiments, the French and Swiss Guards, in the avenue de Roule, and which overflowed into the Champs Élysées. But the Czar only rode quickly down the line, hardly noticed the troops, and then, without any salute to the Regent, set spurs to his horse and galloped back to Paris; thence at once to S. Ouen, where a fête, got up by the Duc

de Trêmes, Governor of Paris, appeared to amuse him more than the review, though he only noticed one lady, Madame de Bethune, the Duke's daughter. The Regent had prepared a fête at S. Cloud, but the Czar had an attack of illness, and could not be present. Versailles seemed to please him ; he had a plan of it drawn out, and enlisted a number of workmen to construct a similar palace in Russia. The Regent allowed them to leave, but most of them found the promises the Czar had made them were not performed, and were glad to get back to France.

“ This Prince was not liberal,” remarks Pöllnitz, “ and his presents, when he made any, were only valuable because given by such a great monarch. I saw a poor soldier at the Invalides present him with a plan of the Hôtel. The Prince seemed pleased with the beautiful work, which had taken ten years to complete, yet the veteran received but a small reward. But the King of France showed how different the French character is to that of the Russian by giving him handsome presents.”

The Czar, however, was pleased with his reception in France, where his stay had attracted a great concourse of visitors ; never had Paris seemed so full. New amusements were much in demand.

“ I was given a suggestion which would have yielded me a large sum could I have carried it out ; it was the offer of a substantial commission if I could obtain the privilege of setting up public balls and gambling-tables in the Champs Élysées, where booths could have been erected. I spoke to the Regent about it, who, at first, as usual, promised fair. But d'Argenson, then only the Head of the Police, induced him to change his mind by telling him that the balls would infallibly lead to great licentiousness. The objection was specious, and bore some verisimilitude ; but, in fact, such a scheme would not have increased disorder, especially in a spot



where it had long been the fashion to walk about at night, so much so that there were often more coaches in the courtyards after midnight than during the day. Moreover, it would have been possible to prevent disorder which was foreseen. But d'Argenson liked neither novelties nor to please any one."

Had Pöllnitz's little scheme, which does him but little honour, succeeded, it would have enabled him to spend a little longer time pleasantly in Paris. When it failed his one idea was to return to Berlin. As he was preparing to start, he saw Count Rothenburg, who had come from Berlin, and was returning shortly, entrusted with French business. He encouraged Pöllnitz to return home, assuring him that nothing would be easier than to sell his estates now. Frederic William, dealing with a high hand with his nobles, had just wrested from them the immemorial right of exemption from taxation. On the other hand, he had removed the entails and allowed every one to dispose of their property as they listed. Further, Rothenburg offered to take Pöllnitz back with him, and to lend him money.

But the advance was made in Law's new paper currency, the Billets d'État. "Taking advantage of my necessities, he forced me into the most ruinous bargain I ever struck." Pöllnitz discounted his notes, and, with what was left of the money, set out for Strasburg, where he was to join Rothenburg, who had gone round by Burgundy to visit some estates he had there.

For nearly a month Pöllnitz dawdled at Strasburg, awaiting Rothenburg. Nothing but lack of money induced him to do so. At last Rothenburg arrived, but only to announce that he could not possibly take Pöllnitz with him to Berlin, because there was no room in his coach. "It is true that his equipage was full, but there were some inside who should have been outside," says the Baron.



FREDERIC, FIRST KING OF PRUSSIA.



## CHAPTER XI

WHILE waiting for money to be sent him from Berlin, Pöllnitz found little to see and do at Strasburg. This city, since it had passed at the Treaty of Utrecht from the Emperor to France, was in the hands of the Romanists, and Lutherans were excluded from all public employment. There was a large French garrison, and Marshal Dubourg was the Governor; he had been tutor to Madame's husband, the Duc d'Orléans, and thus Pöllnitz had an introduction to him, and attended his receptions, such as they were. The Governor lived in more seclusion than is usual with persons in high official position. He received the officers of the garrison in the morning, and made them sit round in a circle. "A solemn silence reigned, which would have dispelled the prejudice of foreigners that French people chatter too much." After about half an hour every one went off to dine where he liked, which, probably, in the present state of our Baron's finances, was not exactly to his taste. But the Marshal only entertained on the rare occasions when some distinguished visitors came from the French Court, or when the Archbishop, Cardinal de Rohan, was in residence. "Otherwise," writes Pöllnitz, "a stay at Strasburg is very dull, especially for those," he adds, with a moral unctuousness which we may surmise proceeded rather from the depletion of his purse than from any natural conviction, "not addicted to the usual dissipations of youth; the latter always find wherewith to amuse themselves, and, indeed, I saw for myself that the young men of Strasburg are very dissolute, and the *bourgeoisie* very easy to become acquainted with."



The nobility of Strasburg were few in number, and poor. The canons of the cathedral, all princes or counts, were not an asset in society, as they were only in the city during their three months' compulsory residence. But the officers of the garrison were pleasant—

“Knowing both how to do their duty and how to amuse themselves at the right time. . . . A fine and brilliant set of young men, whose fingers itch to fight. Never have I seen such fine infantry as the French is to-day. The cavalry are fine men, but not mounted like ours. You know it is the fashion with us to say the French are ruined and played out. I do not know if this is the case, but, to judge by appearances, it cannot be. The troops have never been better clothed, better paid, more active, or finer. The officers are well dressed; they gamble among themselves, live well. It does not appear to me that this is the life of men in a poor way. If so, I should like to be poor all my life.

“The garrison maintains a company of actors. The captains and commandants pay, but the subalterns are allowed in free. The town keeps up a theatre, one of the prettiest in the provinces. The man who likes *grisettes* can amuse himself here. The race is a very fine one; one notices that the prettiest girls are Lutheran. It is said that the fair sex is very sympathetic here; which makes me think that it would not be the place to lose one's heart in.

“Many of our young Germans come here to learn French and fencing. They do not seem any the better for it. The fencing-masters are not superior to those in many German towns, and, as for French, it is very badly spoken here. The inhabitants speak German, and the young men, delighted to talk their own language, forget to learn any other. Besides, they are always together, and only pass on their vices and their visitors. Not knowing what to do with themselves, they spend their time in cafés, at billiards, and sometimes in less

reputable places, for Strasburg is one of the most dissipated towns in Europe."

Money having reached Pöllnitz, he started as quickly as possible for Berlin, passing through Heidelberg, Darmstadt, and Frankfort. At Hanau he stayed to pay his respects to the Count, whose wife was a Princess of Brandenburg-Anspach, sister to the Princess of Wales. The Count was a mighty hunter.

"It is an unpardonable crime to kill a stag on his lands. The small game, rabbits and hares, are no less highly preserved; all these animals ravage the countryside, but they afford amusement to the Count. The poor peasant is reduced to paying *taille* and holding his tongue."

The Count of Hanau, Count of the Empire, the last of his line, Pöllnitz found living in his very old, finely furnished palace in the old quarter of the town, so called to distinguish it from the new quarter built by the Protestant Walloons, who settled there when exiled by the persecutions of Alva. But he often resided in the magnificent château of Phillipsruhe, a mile or two off, built by his late brother. He kept up a large household and suite, and Pöllnitz would fain have lingered there some days. For the Princess was an excellent hostess, everything so well managed, yet—

"One enjoyed at her Court all the freedom one could wish for. When I arrived I was assigned a room; a lackey was ordered to wait upon me. Every morning an official arrived to ask what one wanted for breakfast . . . then if one wished to hunt, one sent to the Head Huntsman for a gamekeeper, and to the Count's stables for horses. If one returned too late for dinner, it was served very nicely in one's room. In the evening, after one had retired, the butler took care to provide one with beer and wine. Visitors' servants were fed

with those of the Count, whose own table is of the best ; usually eighteen covers are laid, and a second table served with equal profusion. . . . The rooms are splendid, and magnificently furnished, and the gardens are in good taste and beautifully situated."

Pöllnitz tore himself away from this delightful Liberty Hall, and went to the dirty little town of Fulda, where he dined at the famous Benedictine Abbey with the Prince-Abbot, Chancellor by right of birth to the Emperor, and Primate of Abbots. "I do not think that, on the whole, it is necessary to have a very sincere vocation to be a monk at Fulda. These gentlemen enjoy all that one could wish for to lead a very pleasant life." This Abbot, an ambitious man, had added very largely to the Abbey, and it "was like the palace of a great King rather than a monastery . . . the Abbey and the adjoining church of cut stone, some of the finest buildings in Germany." The Abbot kept up a great household and several regiments, and a large stable, all well appointed. Pöllnitz—

"Would have had good reason to be satisfied with the welcome he gave me had he not made me drink so much. Few rulers in Germany keep a better table. Nothing is lacking ; one drinks good wine, but in such a quantity that one is soon not in a condition to know what one is drinking. Here, I think, must be the best drinkers in Europe. As I, on the contrary, am one of the worst, I decided that Fulda was not the place for me to pitch my tent. I dined with the Prince, came back drunk to mine inn, and slept. Had I stayed any longer I might well have left for a longer journey than to Berlin. . . ."

From Fulda, "over one of the most disagreeable roads in all Germany, and in a country not well supplied with provisions—I nearly starved to death in the inns"—to Eisenach, "situated at the foot of horrible

mountains." Pöllnitz had little eye for grandeur in natural scenery. The Duke of Saxe-Eisenach, of the Weimar branch, was away, and, as there was nothing to see in the *residenzstadt*, Pöllnitz hurried on to Gotha. The Duke here, of another of the Saxon families, was a wise and kindly ruler, the father of his people, but reserved and inaccessible to strangers. A learned man and a great reader, he was little addicted to society and entertaining. Gotha was an un-Versailed capital, a little oasis among the pleasure-seeking Courts of Germany, and hardly congenial or accessible to Pöllnitz, who passed on to Erfurt "over one of the worst roads I ever saw," and thence to Leipzig. The Michaelmas Fair was being held at Leipzig, the King of Poland, as usual, staying at the Apel's house, because it was nearer the fair-ground than the castle. But Pöllnitz was too anxious to reach Berlin to be delayed even by this attraction, and passed onward.

On his first arrival at Berlin he kept very quiet, for he perceived how uncongenial the changed Court would be to him. However, he could not long remain hidden; gratitude for so much kindness in the past drove him to pay his respects to the widowed Margravine at Schwedt. She received him so kindly, and presently spoke so favourably of him to the King, that he wished to see him.

"By Grumbkow he ordered me to go and speak with him at Charlottenburg, and to have myself announced by one of his valets de chambre, Ast. I would rather have avoided obeying this order, but it was too explicit, as His Majesty had even specified the hour at which I was to wait upon him. So I went to Charlottenburg on the day appointed; I sent for Ast, who came to receive me, and led me to a gallery, where he begged me to wait a while. I had only been there a quarter of an hour when the King came in, followed by La Fourcade, brigadier-general, and Commandant of Berlin.



“His Majesty came straight towards me, and asked me with some quickness where I came from, and why I had returned to Berlin. I replied that I came from France, and was recalled to Berlin by my private business. This Prince continued to question me about my affairs, and seemed very pleased with what I had the honour to reply to him, and, turning to La Fourcade, said to him that he would never have recognized me unless he had been told it was me. He then told me that he looked upon me as a Frenchman. I replied that I should consider myself most unfortunate if His Majesty thought this of me, and that, however far I might be from his Person and his States, I should always think myself honoured by calling myself one of his subjects, and that I should always retain for my King and my country the feelings of respect and fidelity in which I have been brought up.

“The King next asked me if I was planning to sell my estates. I confessed that this was the only means I had left by which to put myself in a position to satisfy my creditors. I even begged him to interpose his authority, so as to compel Fräulein von Pöllnitz to consent to this sale. The King said he would give his orders with regard to that to M. de C——, in order that she might be brought round about it, and then dismissed me graciously.”

[Pöllnitz returned to Berlin, and did not fail to thank the Margravine for her kind offices with the King. A few days later, when the Queen had returned from Charlottenburg, he went to pay his respects, and was most kindly received. “When it became known how Their Majesties had received me, it was sufficient to make the courtiers pay me attentions which I otherwise should not have dared to hope for.”

However, he “cared little for these gentlemen’s civilities,” and set about concluding the great business for which he had come. He offered cousin Charlotte very reasonable terms, in order to gain her consent.

The King ordered her to be written to, at Hanover, informing her that he considered them very moderate, and that she would please him by accepting them. Pöllnitz went himself to Hanover to try and win her over. But neither these good recommendations nor the visits he paid her had any effect, and the "poisonous dragon" remained obdurate.

When the Baron returned from Hanover the King sent for him again. He was introduced into the *Tabagie* by one of the favourites, and found the King playing *tric-trac*, and the Prince of Anhalt and other generals and officers present.

"The King rose when he had finished his game and came towards me and talked very graciously. Then, seating himself, he ordered all those present to do the same, and each sat down, without any regard to rank. The King was smoking, as were most of those in the study. Happily no one offered me a pipe, which was a great joy to me, for never in my life have I been able to smoke.

"The King talked to me much about my affairs. Ere long I perceived that my cousin had won this Prince over to her side; for, directly it was a question of my estate, he told me very frankly that I should not do well in getting rid of it, even should my cousin give her consent; that, far from paying my debts with the money that would accrue to me from this sale, I should spend it on my own pleasures; that it was time to think of something else, which, while giving me occupation, would place me in a position to pay my debts. He added that, however, if I persisted in wishing to sell my estates, he would write again to Fräulein von Pöllnitz to induce her to consent to it; that it was all he could do for me in any circumstances, as, in justice, he could not compel her to give her consent to what she thought would be injurious to her.

"After talking a little more about my private affairs His Majesty touched on the rumour that had been spread

in Berlin about my change of religion, and asked me if it were true that I was a Papist. I replied to him that I was of the same religion as my fathers.

"I will now confess, to my shame, that I had not courage to announce publicly that I was a Catholic. Moreover, I thought that, under such pressure of circumstances, I could get out of the dilemma by an ambiguity. The doctors do the same; this moral is very well thought of among them. The ambiguity consisted in that, by 'the religion of my fathers,' I meant that which my grandfather and my great-grandfather had professed—and, indeed, all my ancestors had been Catholics. My grandfather was, but he embraced the New Religion in order to swim with the stream. The King believed, from what I said, that I still adhered to the Reformed Faith, and did not insist on my saying any more on this subject.

"But the Prince of Anhalt was not so easy to satisfy; he told His Majesty that, to assure himself of the truth of what I had just said, it would be necessary to force me to make my Communion at the cathedral. The King quite agreed with him, but the advice had no effect.

"When I left the King, the Prince of Anhalt, who seemed anxious to know the truth about my conversion, put it on my conscience; he blamed me very much for not having confessed that I was a Catholic. As I was not sure which way these remonstrances tended, I took care not to open my heart to this nobleman, and stuck to my negative."

Pöllnitz's audience with the King had pleased the latter so much, and he spoke so well of him one day among his courtiers, that Pöllnitz's friends advised him to seize this ray of favour, and beg for an appointment. So he wrote to the King at Potsdam, and two days later came a reply, signed with the King's own hand.

"I have received your letter of January 9th, 1718. In reply, I will tell you that I will grant you the first

salary of Gentleman of the Chamber which falls vacant.

“FREDERIC WILLIAM.”

Much impressed with the King's kindness, Pöllnitz hastened to thank him directly he returned from Berlin. The King replied that it was not worth while for such a trifle.

“It seemed to me good enough to begin with for a man unused to seeing his plans succeed. The courtiers vied with each other in every possible welcome; from all sides I received congratulations, which convinced me that I was in favour.

“But my star did not long allow me to remain in peace, and soon a storm arose which drove me farther from my haven than I had hitherto been blown.”

When, early in 1718, Frederic William recalled Baron Kniphausen from the embassy at Paris, Pöllnitz was one of those who applied for the post, which would have suited him exactly, and for which he was not unfitted. Moreover, he offered to take it without much expense to the State, at a reduction of two hundred crowns a month of the usual salary. The Minister, Grumbkow, was pleased with the suggestion, and promised to further it with the King. Pöllnitz himself discussed it with Ilgen, Minister of Foreign Affairs, whose daughter was married to Kniphausen.

Ilgen received Pöllnitz with all possible politeness, promising on oath to serve him in this matter, and adding that he was but too pleased to show his respect and veneration for Pöllnitz's family. Ilgen was a man of no birth, brilliant, hard-working, “whose own brains had raised him, but cold, calculating, and selfish, whose words meant nothing. This great civility on his part made Pöllnitz suspicious. Further, the Minister insisted upon seeing him down to his coach. The Baron



demurred with him on the doorstep, imploring him to escort him no farther, as it was pouring with rain. It was useless; the great Minister remained at the coach-door till it moved off. "That was all he did for me! For, far from helping me with the King, he did quite the contrary."

Pöllnitz was subsequently informed that Ilgen was annoyed with him for asking a reduction of salary, as his son-in-law, a very extravagant man, was always writing from Paris that what he received was not enough to live upon.

"To crown my happiness, the King received an anonymous letter assuring him that I was indeed a Catholic." With it was enclosed the authentic attestation of Père Denys, into whose hands Pöllnitz had entrusted his confession of faith. "The King seemed angry with me, and complained that I had deceived him. Several people exaggerated the alarm of the royal displeasure."

At first Pöllnitz was not frightened, thinking that the talk was only in order to get him away from Court, and that the King was not so angry with him as was made out; but, at last, he received a warning that the King might have him arrested. One H——, who was an ally of M——, a favourite of the King, came to bring Pöllnitz the warning.

"In honour I thought he could not do me an ill turn. For this H—— was a wretch, who, after having run through a large fortune, lived on a small salary the King gave him because he had served with the King of Sweden at Stralsund, and on an office few would have accepted; as his salary was not enough to live upon, several people helped him. I may, indeed, say that, though not in easy circumstances myself, I had been of some use to him. But I can declare that he repaid me with ingratitude. It was he who exaggerated the report, which, in itself, was not enough to force me to leave Court, but the way in which he put it led me

to believe that I was irretrievably ruined if I insisted on staying in Berlin.

“He came to my room one day with a horrified expression, and told me that he had just learnt from Herr von M—— that directly the King returned I should infallibly be arrested. His remarks were accompanied by such an expression of emotion that I believed every word he said. I decided to leave. The difficulty was to raise the money, and that I only succeeded in doing by making many bad agreements which put me in great difficulties later.”

## CHAPTER XII

HAVING turned everything that he could into money, Pöllnitz left Berlin by night, giving out that he was going to Hanover. But directly he was outside the city he took the Leipzig road. After a few days' stay there he went to Mainz, where he had a cousin in the Elector's service, who received him kindly and presented him to the Prince-Archbishop, the first Elector of the Empire, and Count of the Schönborn family. He was a feeble, kind old man, adored by his subjects and very zealous for the weal of the Empire.

But Pöllnitz did not linger at Mainz :

“ Like all cities under an ecclesiastical ruler, it is very dull. There is a large aristocracy, but they only meet ceremoniously. Men see very little of the ladies ; wine appeared to be more to their taste. The great amusement of the inhabitants is to go in summer-time and drink the waters at Wiesbaden, Schwalbach, and Schlangenbad. During that season Mainz, Frankfurt, and Darmstadt are deserts.”

At the Court of the Duke of Würtemberg Pöllnitz had another relation, and perceived another opportunity for obtaining free board, lodging, and entertainment at yet another palace. For a von Pöllnitz, one of the Saxon branch, was a member of the Duke's Privy Council, or Cabinet. Moreover, the Hereditary Prince of Würtemberg had married Henrietta, daughter of Pöllnitz's old protector, the Margrave Philip of Schwedt.

But the Baron did not stay at Stuttgart. For the old ducal Schloss, with its matchless orangery, was de-

serted, its only inhabitant the forlorn Duchess, who lived in great seclusion, her only comfort the frequent visits of her only son. For twenty years past Duke Eberhard had been under the thumb of her proud and successful rival, Countess von Gravenitz. Extraordinary seemed such devotion to Pöllnitz, accustomed to the fickle and fleeting amours of the period.

In vain had the Emperor himself tried to detach Eberhard from his mistress. The Duke had married her to Count Wurben, and then despatched him to Vienna as ambassador. The Gravenitz, unable to dislodge the Duchess from the castle at Stuttgart, had induced the Duke to build for her the magnificent country palace of Ludwigsburg. Here she held court, and all bowed before her imperious will. No effort had she spared to become Duchess, indeed, she was it in all but name, and at forty still all-powerful with the infatuated old man.

Pöllnitz, however, upon this occasion did not pay a visit to this "German Pompadour." He followed the Duke, who was at the baths of Wildbad, or Wildsbadt, with his son and daughter-in-law. Wildbad Pöllnitz thought "one of the most horrid places in Germany," but its waters were of much repute for sciatica and nerves. He found the fat, jolly Duke, bathing, with his son and other gentlemen he had invited, in the big bath, which held twenty people. After the bath they all rested. About noon they assembled in the Duke's apartment, and passed into that of the Hereditary Princess, who lodged at a house opposite. There was a table laid for sixteen, the guests and the household, etc., with the Duke, who was affable and popular. "Few Princes live so familiarly with their courtiers. After dinner the Duke rides, or has ridden before him, some of his highly trained horses." Never had Pöllnitz seen "horses so fine or so well kept." The Duke himself "still rode perfectly; he was a finished adept at all bodily exercises. Sometimes it amused him to drive his coaches himself. I have seen him drive eight horses,



without a postillion, and make them perform as if it were one horse."

In the evening the company assembled for cards at the Hereditary Princess's till supper-time. The Prince was a gentle, kind-hearted little fellow, who had travelled much about Europe; he was passionately fond of display, dancing, the theatre, music, and who, though he was not robust, rode seven or eight horses every morning. His wife was a fine woman, with distinguished manners, very grave, and little inclined to court amusements, but very fond of dress, and dancing splendidly; "extremely gracious, and polite to every one, but particularly to those whom she had known at the Court of Prussia. She did me the honour to converse with me sometimes, and I found she had much sense, and opinions suitable to her birth." As the Duke was a Lutheran, his daughter-in-law Reformed, and the heir-presumptive after the Hereditary Prince (who had only one daughter), his cousin, Prince Alexander, was a Catholic, there were no less than three chapels at this Court.

Whether it was that the waters of Wildbad did not suit Pöllnitz, he became so ill of a malady which had troubled him for some years that, instead of going, as he had intended, to Vienna, he returned to Strasburg, hoping to find a clever surgeon to operate upon him. On the advice of the Governor, Marshal Dubourg, he consulted the one in charge of the Great Hospital.

"I do not know if he be a clever surgeon, but I am sure he is a very dangerous doctor. He took it into his head to give me drugs in order to prepare me, he said, for the operation, but which nearly despatched me into the other world. Happily, I found out his ignorance soon enough not to give him time to kill me."

Discontinuing his prescriptions, Pöllnitz, when he was sufficiently recovered to stand the journey, decided to return to Paris, "as the headquarters of the most experienced surgeons."

Staying a few days at Saverne, he was hospitably welcomed by the great Cardinal de Rohan, who was entertaining a large company. Thence he went to Lunéville. Here, since the last war, when the French had taken Nancy, the Duke and Duchess of Lorraine and Bar kept court, as the town had been given as part of her dowry to the Duchess, the only daughter of Madame. So here again Pöllnitz found a friend.

The Duke lived in great state. His first Minister was Prince Craon, high in favour, who had married his daughter to the Prince of Lixen, formerly known as the Chevalier de Lorraine, who had been the boon companion of Monsieur in his wild youth, and Madame's enemy. The Baron found the Princesse de Lixen very pleasant, and so, he says, did the Duke, for he spent his afternoons with her during Pöllnitz's visit. The Duke and Duchess had rebuilt and enlarged and beautified the château of Lunéville, in imitation of that of Versailles, and were still at work on it. Soon afterwards it was almost entirely burnt down.

Pöllnitz went to Paris by Nancy, Toul, and on by Louis XIV's grand new road through the forest of Haye to Bar-le-Duc, Châlons, Château Thierry, and Meaux. After a few days spent in paying visits of friendship and duty, he put himself in the hands of the famous La Péronie for the operation. It was, of course, long before the days of anæsthetics, and, though La Péronie was as clever as possible, poor Pöllnitz "suffered cruelly."

"During my illness, which lasted some time, my friends bore me company faithfully, and took care to keep me informed of all that was going on; and, if I had been allowed to betray them, or, if I had not been bound by duty to the Government, I could have given some advice which would have been to the Regent's advantage, and he could have stifled at ignition a conflagration which he was able to extinguish more by good luck than good management."

The Regent, indeed, had his hands full. France was in the crisis of the struggle between the Government and the Parliament, "which is," writes Madame, "an endless trouble to my son, and excites the citizens and populace of Paris against him more than ever. . . . Law is extremely unpopular." She feared the Duc de Maine and "The Dwarf," his wife, "plotting treacherously against the Regent."

Orleans was anxious about the Emperor's war against the Turks, Alberoni's aggressions in Sicily and Sardinia, and the naval war between Spain and England. He was employing every means to induce the King of Spain to peace; but they all failed, and finally he prepared to declare war.

Then suddenly, at this moment, the Regent happily discovered "a plot smouldering against him in the heart of the kingdom." Voltaire says that—

"The King of England had already warned him that something was machinating. . . . The Regent had no doubt but what all these intrigues were fomented by Cardinal Alberoni, and he had the Prince of Cellamare, the ambassador of Spain, closely watched. . . . Nothing less than the Duke's removal from the Regency was afoot. The Spanish Minister had collected a body of men in France who wandered about the kingdom as if they were smugglers, hawking salt and other merchandise. These troops, on a certain day, were to enter Paris, invest the Palais Royal, and secure the Regent in person. The plot was only discovered just at the time when it was to have been carried out. Not that I suspect the Prince of Cellamare to have betrayed the Cardinal, but perhaps he did not sufficiently mistrust those with whom he had to deal; for I have been told that a packet containing all the story of the plot and the names of the conspirators was placed in the hands of the Abbé Portocarrero, in the presence of two servants whose fidelity was not proof against the louis d'or of the Palais Royal. Besides this, the Abbé, though a man





THE REGENT ORLEANS.

From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.





of parts, was not experienced enough, or prudent enough, to carry out safely such a delicate business."

Pöllnitz's version is that the Abbé Portocarrero "started for Madrid laden with despatches which held the fates of many people, and had not gone far before his post-chaise broke down crossing a ford." The Abbé Anquétal, in his *Memoirs*, says that—

"The implicative papers were placed in the false bottom of the post-chaise; that the Abbé was misguided enough to take a German as travelling companion; that the latter was stopped by the police, and, the chaise being searched for his belongings, the Abbé's papers were discovered."

Pöllnitz narrates that the Abbé thought he was going to be drowned, yet, in spite of his danger, seemed more concerned for his papers than his own life. This care for the preservation of his precious box seemed suspicious to those who were driving him; the detectives that the Duke had set round Portocarrero warned the former in time for orders to reach the Commandant of Poitiers to arrest him, which was done, and he was brought back to Paris.

Prince Cellamare, being warned of what had happened, demanded the despatch-box, as containing the Embassy papers. It was hinted to him that the authorities were in no mind to take his word for it. The box was opened at the Palais Royal, and the whole plot was found in it, and the names of all concerned.

Pöllnitz says that—

"What the Regent felt most was the finding of the names of persons whom he had loaded with favours. His Royal Highness acted with such moderation under these delicate circumstances, and his conduct was so moderate, that it was hardly apparent that anything extraordinary had occurred in France. He had the Abbé Portocarrero released, as being of no value. As for the Prince of Cellamare, he was invited to a con-

sultation at the Palais Royal, and directly he had arrived there everything at his own house was put under seal."

The Ministers conducted him back to his Hôtel, where he was surprised to find a guard, ordered to be responsible for his person. A few days later his papers were examined in his presence, and then boxes were filled with them, were sealed, and carried to the Louvre till the King of Spain should send reliable people to take them out. At last, on December 13th, the Prince of Cellamare left Paris under escort. As for the smugglers, they disappeared directly the plot came to light.

On December 29th Madame took up her pen :

" I am so troubled that my hand trembles as I write. My son has just come and told me that he has decided to have his brother-in-law and his wife arrested. All has been discovered. Papers have been seized at the Paris Embassy, and those arrested have made complete avowals. The Duchesse has been sent to Dijon, her husband to the castle of Doubes. All the others to the Bastille."

The Maines were the head and front of the plot in France. The Duke had never forgiven nor forgotten that Philip of Orleans had been made Regent instead of himself.

" The Duc de Maine," writes Pöllnitz, " had been the evening before to pay a visit to his sister, the Duchesse d'Orléans, and had stayed three hours ; he had returned to Sceaux, and was arrested next morning early, and taken under a strong guard to the castle of Doubes. The same day, very early, his wife was arrested, almost in bed, by the same officer whom she had been entertaining to supper till the small hours only the night before, and who found, on his return home, the *lettre de cachet* appointing him to a job he would willingly have got out of. The Duchesse was taken to the castle of Dijon, her head servants to the Bastille and Vincennes.

The Cardinal de Polignac [favourite of the Duchesse] was exiled to his Abbey of Anchin, the Prince de Douches and the Comte d'Eu to Eu."

Meanwhile, in Spain the King had been insulting the French ambassador, d'Aignan. The latter had taken his leave of the King and Queen—the former was dangerously ill—but remained a few days to see how the illness would turn. It seems that the King having told him that, in the event of his death, he had appointed Alberoni Regent, the Duke replied that wills like that of Louis XIV can be broken. This so displeased the Cardinal that d'Aignan was ordered to leave Madrid in twenty-four hours. Nine hours later he and the Duchess were awoke out of bed and escorted by the Bodyguard out of the town.

"Alberoni, who did not yet know if his plot was discovered, wrote in haste to Cellamare to tell him how he had dismissed d'Aignan, but that Cellamare was to stand firm in Paris, unless removed by force, protesting. The Cardinal added: 'Supposing your Excellency is obliged to leave, you will first set a match to the mines,' not knowing that they had already exploded.

"This letter, which was of course opened, confirmed the plot of Cellamare, and the affronts offered to the ambassador of the Very Christian Majesty clenched the Regent's opinion that the Spanish monarch wished to proceed to the last extremity. War was declared on both sides, and Spain did not come out of it with honour."

Now as to how these startling events affected Pöllnitz himself. For once in a way his luck had been good. He had been safer in La Péronie's hands, however cruel, than he would have been out of them.

"Although I was not among those in the plot, I



appeared as if I was ; several councils had been held by my sick-bed ; I was friends with those who were involved in the affair ; at last, partly from caution, partly from panic, I made up my mind to fly. I left Paris somewhat precipitately, intending to go to the Palatine Court, and to stay there till the storm should entirely have blown over ; and to reach Germany by way of Lorraine, which I had much difficulty in doing. I had no passport, and the orders of the Court were to detain every one without one. I decided to make use of stratagem. A league out of Toul, which is the last fortress in France, I pretended to be ill, in order to have a pretext for stopping and sending back my postillion. I spent the night in a village, and, on rising very early in the morning, I told my hostess that I was going into Toul on foot, and begged her to send my boots to an address I gave her. My plan was to enter Toul as if I were a man belonging to the town ; I hoped that, being on foot and not looking like a traveller, I should pass without being detained.

“Not at all. The guard stopped me, and asked me who I was and whither I was going. I said that I was a German, and had been a valet de chambre to a German lord who had died in Paris, and that I was going home. The sergeant took me to the Commandant, who seemed to me a surly fellow. Nevertheless, I thought that I should be wrong to complain, and made out that I was a valet, and indeed he treated me as such. He asked me several questions, to which I still replied as a very humble valet, hoping to soften his black looks ; but nothing could protect me from his harshness.

“ ‘ You are not a valet, my friend,’ said he. ‘ You are probably, I think, some bankrupt. You must tell me the truth, or I shall have you put in the cells.’

“ I still maintained that I was a valet ; but the man was not satisfied with my replies, and had me removed to the guard-room, where he left me for five or six hours, at the end of which time he sent to tell me that I could

go to an inn. A soldier took me there, but did not leave me. Next day the same soldier took me again to the Commandant, who had me brought into his study, and told me that it was useless to conceal any longer who I was, as he had just been informed by a man who knew me.

"I confess that I began to feel alarmed, but yet I maintained my thesis with all possible boldness. He then called one of his servants and told him to bring the man who said that he knew me. Happily, this man existed only in his imagination. Nevertheless, he grew very impatient when he did not come. At last he told me that I must go back to the guard-house, and that I must stay there till I had given him clearly to understand who I was.

"I thought of an expedient which succeeded. I told him that I was willing to remain under arrest till I had received a reply from the landlady, in whose house my master had died, who would confirm what I had asserted. He gave me paper, and I did indeed write to my landlady in Paris, in the name of a valet de chambre I had left at her house. As she had a nimble wit, and as she knew my writing, I was sure she would easily make out what was the matter.

"My letter written, I remitted it to the Commandant. He read it, and told me that he would undertake to have it sent, and to obtain a reply. Meantime he sent me back to my inn, and two hours later he sent to tell me that I could proceed on my way.

"You may be sure that I did not need telling twice. I left Toul afoot, hired a horse in a village belonging to the Prince of Elbœuf, and went to Nancy, where I took the precaution of obtaining a passport. The host where I lodged got one for me in the name of a Nancy shopkeeper.

"Not deeming it wise to pass by Strasburg, where I might have been recognized, I made for Hagenau, thence for Fort S. Louis, where I crossed the Rhine, and at last arrived at Heidelberg early in 1719."

## CHAPTER XIII

FOR over a hundred years previous to Pöllnitz's visit, Heidelberg, so beautifully situated among the mountains, in a wooded gorge of the Neckar, had suffered terribly by fire and sword. It had undergone five sieges, and in the sack by Tilly its famous library had been stolen and sent to the Vatican. Madame's grandfather, the luckless "Winter King," in grasping at the shadow of Bohemia, had lost his ancestral substance, the Rhine Palatinate. Four times had Louis XIV's armies overwhelmed it, finally blowing up half the Electoral Palace on the hill, and burning the town. Madame's brother, the Elector Charles, over a quarrel about a church in which he had to give way to his Protestant subjects, removed, in dudgeon, his capital to Mannheim. His successor, however, of the Neuburg branch, occasionally inhabited his half-ruined castle, and it was there that Pöllnitz found him.

Our Baron admired the view from it because it was that of "the most beautiful plain in Germany," and not of the mountains he detested. But the building was not to his liking, "not being in the taste of this century; moreover, not one of the four wings of which it is composed remained undamaged by the French."

"The architecture I can hardly define; it is neither Gothic nor modern, it is a rhapsody of all the orders, heaped one upon the other, built rather to cost a great deal, without thought if it were to be bad or good. . . . Inside it was no more regular than without, being full of little steps, leading from room to room. The gardens, once the finest in Germany," were desolate.

But Pöllnitz enjoyed himself at Heidelberg; all the more, probably, on account of his recent lucky escape. The Elector kept a large and splendid Court, was himself "the delight of his household," and of his servants, generous, affable, gentle, yet dignified, though he liked to be spoken to frankly. A man "of irreproachable morals, he was by no means an enemy of pleasure . . . he loved dancing above everything; he danced too well, even for a Prince."

His only child was married to the Prince of Sulzbach, and she was very musical, "dancing and singing with much charm, especially Italian airs, which she accompanied on the clavecin to perfection." The Prince, her husband, was grave, even to severity, but very polite, especially to foreigners.

The Elector's mode of life was peculiar for his day. He rose extremely early, and had got through state business, mass, and a game of billiards before the mid-day dinner of the period. This was a very lengthy meal. "Sometimes one drank a little—and no blame to one, for the wine was delicious." After dinner, when the Elector had escorted his daughter to her apartments, his matutinal hours, and his good Rhine wine, produced their effect upon him, and he undressed and went to bed for some hours. Between five and six he rose and dressed again, gave audiences, and went into the Hall of Assembly, to the Princess and the Court, and played piquet or tric-trac. When his game was over he went to bed again, and the Princess supped.

During the afternoon, her husband generally following his father's example and reposing, the Princess held receptions in her lady-in-waiting's apartments, and there was music. She sang herself, accompanied by one of her ladies. Signora Claudia, and some of the musicians of the Elector's orchestra, took part in the little concert, "one of the most perfect I have ever heard."

Both the Elector and his son were most kind to Pöllnitz, though, upon one occasion, he could not but consider their hospitality somewhat overdone.



In one of the cellars of the castle is the famous Big Tun of Heidelberg, holding forty-nine thousand gallons, and over fifty years old in Pöllnitz's day.

"The Elector often gave drinking-parties on the platform above it. I confess I cannot understand that people can find any pleasure in parties in such a place, where one is not very comfortable," writes Pöllnitz. "Even if one is not very tall, one's head touches the vaulting of the cellar, which, moreover, is very dark.

"One day, at table, the Elector asked me if I had seen the Great Tun, and, when I replied in the negative, this Prince, the most gracious Sovereign in the universe, told me he would show it me. He suggested to the Princess, his daughter, that they should go there after dinner. She agreed. Trumpets sounded the march, and the Court followed with great ceremony. Having mounted the platform above the tun, the Elector did me the honour to drink *Wilkom* [sic] in a silver-gilt cup of great size. He emptied it, and, having had it filled again in his presence, he presented it to me by a page. Good manners, and the respect I owed to the Elector's orders, did not permit of my declining this chalice; all the grace I asked was that I should be allowed to empty it at my leisure, and in several draughts. This was granted me.

"Meanwhile the Elector was chatting with the ladies. I made use of his absence, and did not deem it against my conscience to deceive him. I threw a good part of the wine under the tun, another on the ground, and I drank the smallest part. I was lucky enough not to be detected in my trickery. The Elector was very pleased with me. Several other large glasses were drunk; the ladies moistened their lips and contributed to our defeat.

"I was one of the first to lose control of myself. I felt convulsive movements by which I was threatened if I continued to drink; I stole away, and got down from the platform as best I could. I sought the door of

the cellar ; but, when I showed myself, I found two of the Bodyguard, who shouted at me with presented carbines : ‘ Halt ! No one passes here ! ’

“ I implored them to let me pass ; but my words fell on deaf ears. I found myself in a great predicament. To get up on the tun again was to go to death. What was to become of me ?

“ I shoved myself under the tun in the hope that I could remain there hidden. Useless precaution ! One does not escape one’s fate. Mine was to be carried out of the cellar without knowing that I was carried. For the Elector had noticed my desertion.

“ I heard him say : ‘ Where is he ? What’s become of him ? Look for him, and bring him here, alive or dead ! ’

“ The guards at the door were questioned. They said that I had appeared in order to go out, but that they had sent me back. All these inquisitions, which I overheard in my niche, made me draw back still farther. I had covered myself with two planks which I had happened to find, and, unless it were a cat, or a devil, or a page, it would have been difficult to discover me.

“ But a very small page, who was both devil and page, did find me ; and began to scream like a lunatic : ‘ Here he is ! Here he is ! ’

“ They came and dragged me out of my hiding-place. You can imagine what a fool I felt. I was taken before my Judge, who was the Elector. I took the liberty of objecting to him, to him and to all the gentlemen of the suite, as being also in the same line of business.

“ ‘ Ah ! my little gentleman ! ’ the Prince said to me. ‘ You object to me as Judge. I am going to give you others. We will see if you do any better ! ’

“ He appointed the Princess, his daughter, and her ladies to try me. The Elector was my prosecutor. I pleaded my cause ; it was put to the vote. I was unanimously condemned to drink till death supervened.

“ The Elector said that, as the Sovereign, he would mitigate my sentence ; that I was to drink that day

four large glasses, each holding half a tankard, and so on for fifteen consecutive days. I was to drink at his table, after eating my soup, another such glass to his health. Every one admired the Elector's clemency ; I had to do as the others did, and thanked him for it.

"I next underwent my capital sentence. I did not lose my life, but only, for a few hours, my powers of speech and my senses. I was carried on to a bed, where, when I came to my senses some time later, I learnt that all my accusers had been served in like manner to myself, and that all had quitted the cellar in another manner to that in which they had entered it.

"The next day the Elector had the kindness to mitigate the remainder of my sentence. He let me off the task to which I had been condemned, and was satisfied with the promise which I gave him to eat for a month at his table."

The courtiers at Heidelberg followed their master's example and were very civil to Pöllnitz. He was invited to all the best houses. "Every day great banquets and new pleasure-parties. I spent the short time I stayed at Heidelberg very well." He was so happy at this Court that he thought he would ask for a post there, and made use for that purpose of the best interests he could find. However, in spite of assiduous attentions, he found a cabal against him, which stood in his way. "It was headed by very influential persons, who preferred to see only people obtain appointments whom they knew would grovel to them. The Grand Chamberlain was the most opposed to my advancement."

Pöllnitz drew down upon his head the indignation of this official by one of his foolish, hot-headed impulses. One day, as he was accompanying the Elector from the Princess's apartments to his own, the Baron, by mistake, strayed into a room into which, by court etiquette, only the Grand Chamberlain penetrated. Of this custom Pöllnitz was unaware. An official ordered him out rather impatiently. The Baron inquired if this order came

from the Elector. He was told that it came from the Grand Chamberlain. On hearing which he answered the official in a manner which somewhat surprised the latter, and gave him "a message to carry, which, doubtless, the Grand Chamberlain did not find much to his taste. I inveighed against the Chamberlain and his clique in a way which, while it indeed cooled down my wrath, was the reason why I could not enter the service of one of the best princes in the world."

Pöllnitz took his leave of the Elector, who gave him a large present, and, what was more, letters of introduction to his sister, the widowed Empress Eleanora, at Vienna, where the Baron intended to seek employment.

But, as he was preparing to start, he received a letter from Paris telling him that the storm he had so much dreaded was overpast, and that his fears had been ill-founded. The Regent, far from suspecting him in any way, was, on the contrary—

"More favourably inclined than ever before to show me the good effects of his patronage, and that, therefore, I was advised to return. As this information came from a very good quarter, I had no scruple about returning to Paris.

"I presented myself at the Palais Royal as before, and Madame welcomed me in a manner which confirmed me in the hope that I should obtain something from the French Court."

Pöllnitz's informant was right. A letter more than usually caustic from Madame to her step-sister, the Raugravine Louise, in January 1719, shows that she did not think that her protégé's sudden disappearance from Paris had anything to do with politics. But the shrewd old lady was not deceived about his character.

"... P.S. I must add yet this. Pellnitz (*sic*) is a swindler. He cannot show his face in France, because he has cheated every one, and he owes money to God and the devil. . . ."



Pöllnitz found Paris a city of unrest. The war with Spain and the Mississippi Bubble were in full swing, but both Law and Alberoni were marching to their dooms. Law and his great scheme had fascinated the Regent, and both were losing their heads over it, and whirling France with them. Speculation had replaced gambling. Early in 1719 the "chimerical value of the shares was worth eighty times all the money which could circulate in the kingdom"; and still Law schemed. Shrewd old Madame grew uneasy :

"Everything has doubled in price since last year—furniture, clothes, food. . . . The cause of all this financial difficulty is the increase of speculation. I have often been told you don't care for gambling ; therefore you are no good for anything."

Then the Regent backed up Law further. An edict was issued forbidding more than a hundred francs to be paid in specie. Bank-notes were made obligatory as currency. Hundreds of thousands of new shares were issued, and the Mississippi Company was boomed. Princes of the Blood and the great nobles spent their days in the office of the Company in the Rue Quincampoix ; the narrow old street was well-nigh impassable. Glowing accounts came from the new colony. Madame "quite tired of hearing money and shares talked about and around me . . . 250,000 more people in Paris than a month ago. Stories have to be added to the houses, and the streets are so full of coaches that people get run over. . . ."

The Duc de Richelieu was arrested by the Regent, a letter he had written to Alberoni having been discovered. "All the women in Paris plunged in grief," writes Madame, for their "curled darling," including her own granddaughter, Mademoiselle de Valois.

Pöllnitz haunted the Regent's antechamber all day, begging for a post ; to enliven himself, he went sometimes to Madame de R——'s. "But these visits were

no longer the result of an ardent passion, but only the sad resource of the situation in which I found myself."

His friends now pointed out to him what little hope of success he had at the French Court. But once again good Abbé Asfeld came to the rescue, and, taking advantage of the anxiety in which he found Pöllnitz, "hunted me, so to speak, from a place where I was wasting my time and the little money I had."

"I must confess," wrote Madame at this time, "that I am surprised that Paris is still on its feet, and has not been swallowed up, for everything here people do is so awful, night and day, that it makes my hair stand on end."

The Abbé was quite right. Paris, at this moment, was no place for Pöllnitz; however, in sending his protégé away, he took care that he should remain under the influence of Mother Church. Armed with the Palatine's introductions, the Baron was now to try his luck with the Emperor.

In order to avoid importunate questions from the Commandant of Toul, Pöllnitz travelled by way of Metz. Here he found good company, rich parliamentary people, a large garrison, a hospitable Commandant and provincial Governor, and would fain have lingered had his little affairs permitted. So he crossed the Rhine at Spiers, and went by Heidelberg and Stuttgart to Ulm. Thence to Augsburg, with an adventure on the way.

"The road was a very bad one for travellers, but, thanks to the snow which had smoothed the roads, I was not very uncomfortable. On the other hand, I nearly perished in the same snow, as such a quantity had fallen during the last two days that one could not find the way. On one stage I found my postillion had lost it, though he had grown grey on the same road. Every moment I saw I was in danger of being upset in some ditch, when, having reached the entrance of a hollow

road, the postillion blew his horn in order to make any chaise that might be coming towards us get out of the way.

"A voice emerged out of the cutting shouting to the postillion: 'Is that you, Stephen?'

"'Ho!' shouted my postillion. 'Is that you, Christoph? God be praised that you're here!' Then, turning to me, very pleased: 'Now you are out of danger; here is a blind man who will guide us to the post-house where we want to go.'

"I thought the wag was making fun of me; but, a few steps farther on, I did see a poor wretch without any eyes, who offered to lead us safely. I gave myself up to him; he walked so quickly in front of my post-chaise that the horses followed at a slow trot, and led me without any mishap to the post-house.

"He told me that, fifteen years before, he had lost both his eyes through an abscess, which burst, after causing him ten months' frightful suffering; so much so that he thought himself lucky to lose his sight. But when I asked him if he was not very grieved at losing his sight he said that, at first, it did trouble him very much, but that he always comforted himself by recalling the pain that he had endured whilst losing it, and said to himself that it was better to be blind and well, than to see and suffer as he had suffered. Now that he was accustomed to his condition, it did not trouble him.

"I asked him if he would not be very glad to see again. He told me that he would, if it were possible, but that, if he had to suffer the same pain to recover it as he had endured in losing it, he would a hundred times rather remain blind.

"When I told him how surprised I was that he had found the way better than those with sight, he told me that, since he had become blind, he came regularly on Sundays and Festivals to hear mass at the place where we were, and so the road was very familiar to him. He added that he sometimes went alone to beg, three or

four leagues from his village, which was a quarter of a league from the hollow road where I had found him.

"I dismissed the man after giving him some alms, and admired Divine Providence, Who, in afflicting the poor wretch with what seemed to me worse than death, gave him courage to bear his misfortune with patience."

At the inn where Pöllnitz stayed at Augsburg, "The Three Kings" ("The Three Moors" ?), there was a fine hall, well lighted, where there were cards—

"A supper *à picnic*, and after supper a ball. . . . It should occasion no surprise that the aristocracy should hold their Assembly at an inn. It is one of the finest houses in Germany, and the most magnificent inn in Europe . . . One could not have been better served."

Munich Pöllnitz thought one of the most brilliant Courts in Europe. He describes at length the city, the fine churches, the Electoral Palace, which he thought only surpassed by the Tuileries; but the gardens, surrounded by a large arcade, "not in the taste of this century." He describes the Orangery, the Menagerie, with the lions, etc., and one of the finest riding-schools he had ever seen. The palace was connected by a gallery with the superb opera-house, which the Elector was very fond of. Even in those days the rulers of Bavaria were the enthusiastic patrons of musical drama. "No money spared; scenery, machinery, dresses, all magnificent and well arranged." Really Pöllnitz might have been writing a century and a half later! Specially was he struck by a chandelier of enormous size let down through the roof of the theatre at the opening on gala nights, and then, at once, drawn up again. He could never find out the reason of this performance.

The Baron greatly enjoyed life at the Court of the Elector Maximilian. His first wife had been a daughter of the Emperor Leopold; his second of John Sobieski. She preferred a quiet life, and was immersed in good



works. The Electoral Prince had served his apprenticeship in war against the Turks. A good linguist, and of much charm, he had a great social reputation at Vienna. Little did Pöllnitz think, as he enjoyed himself at Munich, with this attractive young man as leader in all the amusements, that he should see him, a sickly invalid, crowned Emperor, for a short, unhappy reign, his country over-run, and his capital in the enemy's hands.

Charles's younger brothers were Ferdinand, very handsome, and Clement, Bishop of Münster. All three were mighty hunters.

Never had the Court of Bavaria been so splendid as under Maximilian; it was almost as ceremonious as that of Vienna, "the most gallant and polite in Germany." Next to music the Elector loved cards—*passe* and *faro*, and other games of chance. There were receptions three times a week, either in the Electress's apartments, when ladies appeared in court dress, or in the great Orangery, when they could wear cloaks; and at the card-tables no rank was observed. Every day there were French plays, balls, and gambling. Three days a week a concert, all the company masked. After the concert, dancing and cards.

"These public Assemblies, where the Elector and all the Court are present, are a great source of revenue to the valets de chambre of the Elector, for, besides the entrance fees, they have also the card-money, and are interested in nearly all the banks to such an extent that these servants have nearly all the money of the nobility, with which they are not averse to making a show."

During Pöllnitz's stay he saw one of the Elector's daughters take the veil, a ceremony of much pomp, attended by all the Court.

"Besides these pleasures we have also quieter ones; I mean those which are to be found in good society.



OLD DRESDEN.  
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.



These exist here more than in other German towns, but chiefly among foreigners in the Elector's service rather than among Bavarians. The latter are generally proud; it is true that they are so more because they think it good style than because they are so naturally. They become more amiable when shown that one is not impressed by their grand airs."

Bavaria was "one of the most prosperous States of the Empire, and, next to the King of France, the Elector possessed the greatest number of the most beautiful country houses—Schleissheim, Taco, Furstেনriet, Starnberg, and Nymphenburg." To the latter Pöllnitz followed the Court when the fine weather came on, "an enchanted spot," which Maximilian had greatly enlarged, adding stables and superb gardens and a pavilion with baths. "After the gardens at Versailles, there are none so fine as Nymphenburg."

One of the amusements of the Court when there was driving in light, open, pair-horse chaises, a gentleman driving, and two ladies inside, one or two gentlemen standing behind them. Then there were gondola parties on the grand canal in the gardens, fishing parties, small-game shooting in the little park, and stag-hunting in the immense woods which surrounded it. Pöllnitz fancied himself "in an enchanted isle."

During Pöllnitz's visit to Munich he found a Prince he knew well in Paris making a lengthy stay at the Electoral Court, on his return from the war against the Turks in Hungary. The Comte de Charolais was the son of the head of the Condé branch of the Bourbons, the Duc de Bourbon, who had died some years before. Left fatherless, the hare-brained Charolais, who resembled his maternal grandmother, the Montespan, was one of the worst specimens of the *roués* of the Regency, young in years but old in vice. In him profligacy almost amounted to insanity. His mad freaks were unaccountable. He had, however, shown some ability during the war, to which he escaped without the know-



ledge of his mother or the Regent. Giving out that he was going out hunting very early, and taking with him only two attendants, he galloped seven stages without drawing rein on his brother the Duke's horses, and had reached Imperial Flanders when he was thought to be still at the chase in the forest of Chantilly. He passed through Germany and Vienna without presenting himself to the Emperor, and reached Prince Eugene at the siege of Belgrade.

At Munich the Elector was entertaining this flighty guest in great style, only servants who spoke French being appointed to wait on him. But the Prince—

“ Having picked up German in a very short time, soon made the peasants understand him better than they did me. . . . One day, out shooting, he told me to ask a peasant something; but he only stared. The Comte laughed at me, and, asking the man what he wished to know, was answered at once because he spoke the Bavarian accent so well.”

In May the Baron, with many regrets and full of gratitude to the Elector and his sons, went on his way to Vienna by Passau.

Here he spent Whit-Sunday—all the world in its best, the little *bourgeoise* in black velvet with scarlet petticoats with rows of gold braid, many beads, necklaces, and jewelry. Pöllnitz took the Sacrament at the Cathedral, thus, on approaching the Austrian frontier, demonstrating his adhesion to his new communion, an adhesion not likely to be unmarked at Vienna, “ where they loved converts.”

## CHAPTER XIV

WHEN Pöllnitz came to Vienna the city had not long been restored, almost rebuilt, after the damage done by the Turks during the siege. The Imperial Palace, the Burg, struck him only by its size and its gloom.

"A stranger who saw this palace at Vienna, not knowing what it was, would hardly fancy it the habitation of the first Prince of Europe." Nor did he think La Favorite, in a suburb, any finer; a convent-like building, it stood on the high road, and lacked even a fore-court. Schönbrunn was still little more than the hunting-box of the Emperor Matthias, and the improvements of Joseph I were yet unfinished. On the other hand, he found some of the *hôtels* of the aristocracy very magnificent, especially that of Prince Eugene, with its fine garden and rich library, the delight of the owner's leisure.

The Prater he called "the Bois de Boulogne of Vienna. In the gardens of the Emperor lay the ruins of a fine palace, burnt by the Turks; but the garden was so infested by an appalling cloud of insects from the Danube, as to be deserted by promenaders."

A few days after his arrival Pöllnitz was presented to the Kaiser, Charles VI. His Court, thought Pöllnitz, "the simplest and yet, at the same time, the most magnificent in Europe . . . plain, and even lugubrious, with its black liveries with yellow and white stripes." But yet the ceremonial, on what were called gala occasions, appeared elaborate and punctilious to an extreme, even to one accustomed to the pomp of the Grand Monarque.

Society gathered, after the Emperor's supper, at the

Assembly, which was held at Madame de Rabutin's. There all the *beau monde* was to be seen, old Prince Eugene coming every evening, and playing piquet with the Countess Budiani and other ladies. It broke up about eleven. Supper-parties were the exception, for the greater part of the entertaining was at dinner, and the dinner-hour was extremely late.

The operas were well put on, and connoisseurs assured the young Baron, who is always modest as a musical critic, that the music was excellent. "As for me, I found them as dull as most Italian operas, because they are not accompanied by dancing and other amusements." Later in life Pöllnitz's taste altered. We find him devoted to the melodious Italian opera of the day, and, as Royal Impresario, producing the same at the Royal Opera-house at Berlin; but he always took care to throw in a ballet.

The Baron had a great eye for punctilio, which was to stand him later in good stead; he had already a good deal of experience in court ceremonial, and describes that of the Imperial Court voluminously.

"The Etiquette—such is the name given to the ancient customs—gives the Court an air of constraint which is not seen anywhere else. . . . All the world cries out at this etiquette; the Emperor even seems sometimes bored with it. Yet it is carried out as if it were a dogma of faith, and as if an Ecumenical Council were necessary to repeal it. . . . Nevertheless, a well-born stranger (birth is necessary here) finds a pleasure at this Court which he will not find in Paris or London; I mean the ease of making acquaintances. When one has paid one's respects to Their Majesties, an introduction to one house only is necessary in order to be free of all the rest, with the advantage that everywhere German, French, Italian, and Spanish is spoken, whereas a stranger must perforce speak French in Paris and English in London. With German one manages very well at Vienna. . . . It is very easy to kiss the hands

of Their Imperial Majesties, and even to obtain a private audience.”

Genuflexions formed a great part of court etiquette.

“One knelt to kiss hands, one knelt when Their Majesties passed to dinner. These genuflexions were necessary at a private audience, or on approaching or retiring from the Emperor, who only nodded in return.”

There were no less than three Empresses living at Vienna during Pöllnitz's visit—two Dowagers, and the Emperor's wife. To each of the three the Baron had letters of private recommendation, which launched him instantly at the Imperial Court. For the reigning Empress was a Princess of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, whose grandparents had received him so hospitably at their Court, whilst, of the Dowagers, one was the Hanoverian Princess, niece by marriage of the Electress Sophia, the other a Princess Palatine, sister of Pöllnitz's late bibulous host at Heidelberg.

The wife of the Emperor Charles VI was “the most beautiful person at her Court,” gorgeous in her dress, and especially in her diamonds, of which she had several millions' worth. “This number increases daily, because of the handsome presents the Emperor gives her. Charitable, generous, of sound faith,” she was also now “a good Catholic without hating the Protestants, convinced that the love of one's neighbour is one of the things commanded by God to man, and that charity and good example are the best means of bringing those back to the Church who are separated from it.”

The Emperor was orthodox to bigotry. Roman Catholicism was the only faith tolerated in his dominions, but the envoys of Protestant Powers were permitted to have their chapels. “I have seen,” writes Pöllnitz, “the Emperor, when he met the Host (escorted in the street always by the guards, who make



the people kneel) descend from his coach and follow it to the church."

"It was impossible to see a more perfect union than that which existed between His Imperial Majesty Charles VI and his wife. During her dangerous illness he nursed her himself, rising at night to give her medicine." The one cloud over their marriage was that they had but two daughters; a third was born after Pöllnitz's visit to Vienna, but never a son, and hence much trouble in Europe.

The two Dowager-Empresses lived in a perpetual state of mourning; their apartments were hung with black, black their dresses, their liveries, their coaches. They could attend no plays, balls, or concerts. Their seclusion was almost as great as that of an Indian widow. "In losing their husbands they had to give up all the amusements of life." The Empress Wilhelmina wintered in a convent in Vienna and spent the summer at Schönbrunn. "Her girlhood had been spent at the Courts of Versailles and Modena. She was a good linguist, of fine appearance, a great reader, and well endowed with intellect. During her husband's life-time she had loved amusement, but now, though still well-preserved and dignified, she was entirely occupied with religious observances and in good works."

Herself a convert from the Reformed Faith, she was interested in Pöllnitz, who often paid his respects to her at Schönbrunn. She was very kind to him, giving him "substantial favours," which he sorely needed, and he was "very grateful to her, and I could not look at her without feeling the profound veneration I had for her sacred person."

Charles VI, short, very stout, sunburnt and ruddy, with his bright eyes and Austrian lower lip, the Baron found, upon closer acquaintance, more affable and benign than his grave appearance would lead one to suppose. He loved hunting, and the Empress sometimes accompanied him. Sometimes they rode together in the riding-school. The Emperor loved music,

reading it easily at sight, and was also a composer. An opera he had written had been performed by some of the nobility, the Empress playing the accompaniments and their two daughters dancing, while a small and select audience looked on, including, one is glad to note, the much-secluded Dowagers.

A grand figure in Viennese society was Prince Eugene, covered with glory and wealth. Polite to all, he was yet cold and reserved; but he entertained munificently. Especially splendid were his evening parties in the summer-time, when his beautiful garden and orangery were brilliantly illuminated, and his fine menagerie on view. Personally the great little general was ill dressed, and hated pomp, ceremonial, and restraint.

After his audience with the Emperor and the Imperial family, Pöllnitz was presented to all the ministers—

“And thus, in a short time, I knew all the Court. I was lucky enough to make influential friends there, who did not wait for me to pay them assiduous attentions before giving me marks of their good-will. They begged Prince Eugene to employ me. I had the honour of saluting him, and of presenting the letters of recommendation which the Elector Palatine had given me for him. The Prince received me with much kindness, but said that he could not promise to find me a post, because the colonels disposed of all the commissions in the regiments; but added that he would be pleased to do all in his power for me.

“Indeed, shortly afterwards he kindly spoke of me to Count Maximilian von Stahrenberg (lieutenant-general of the Imperial Army, colonel of an infantry regiment, and Deputy Governor of Vienna), who gave me a company in his regiment, which was in Sicily.

“With this present I was delighted, and I fancied that luck was weary of always being against me. Nevertheless, after the first feelings of delight, I made some serious cogitations, which threw me back into my old

despondency. I had no friends, and I foresaw that I should have to make a considerable outlay. Besides, I had some little debts which I would have liked to pay off before leaving Vienna ; it was necessary to do up my travelling carriage, which was somewhat delapidated ; finally, I must journey to Sicily,—all of which meant much expense.

“ It was at this juncture that I received fresh marks of my friends’ attachment to me ; each one interested themselves efficaciously on my behalf. Fräulein von Klenck had been with the Dowager-Empress Wilhelmina as maid of honour ever since she came to Vienna, and was very much attached to her. . . . If the epithet of ‘ good fellow ’ may be applied to the sex, Fräulein von Klenck deserves it more than any one else ; no one can be more upright or more liberal. . . . She obtained for me a present from Her Imperial Majesty. The Countess of W——, to whose reception I went daily, made me an advance of a thousand ducats, telling me that I might pay her back whenever I could, or, rather, when I was a lieutenant-general ! She accompanied this most generous gift with such a wise and Christian speech that it seemed to emanate more from a mother than a friend. This lady had been much touched by my change of faith, and she helped me all the more readily to wind up my affairs because she feared that I might succumb to the temptation of turning Protestant again in order to obtain employment in my own country.”

Pöllnitz criticizes shrewdly the women of Vienna, in court society and in the lower ranks, his opinions the result of his present stay in the Imperial capital, and of subsequent visits.

“ They are tall and well-made, walking well, but bowing so badly that you would say they were going to injure themselves internally when they make a curtsy.” Though they dressed with more magnificence than taste, they hardly wore rouge, much less white ; patches

were not in fashion, and they were not coquettes. "Frank, but not easy to make friends with, cold, as are all Germans, they are less prone to gallantry than to gambling, luxury, and extravagance." Neglectful house-wives, they know of—

"No book save their prayer-books, and are extremely punctilious in church-going and in religious observances. The least devout hear mass at least once a day. After mass there is a little gossip in church; calls till dinner-time; coffee; playing at quinze till evening; then to Court; after that the Assembly, and piquet or quadrille. Then to bed, quite satisfied with a day spent in nonchalance and indolence.

"They are as devoted to Vienna as the Parisians to Paris. 'Away from Vienna, no salvation!' When interested in any one they are good friends, and faithful. . . . Gallantry was more the fashion under the late Emperor Joseph than it is to-day," probably owing to the excellent example of conjugal fidelity set by the Imperial pair.

Among people of the second rank Pöllnitz found very good living, the Austrians setting great store by a good table. Such abundance pertained that Pöllnitz had known Austrian youth—

"Declare that one did not fare well in Paris, because two calves' tongues are not served in one dish. . . . A great expense is the many varieties of wines, for foreign wines are dear. You must have ten kinds at least; I have been at houses where there were eighteen. A slip of paper is placed under every plate, on which is written the different wines on the buffet."

Austrian pride struck Pöllnitz very much.

"As their sovereign holds the first rank among the Princes of Christendom, so they think themselves also the first nation in the world. . . . Nothing is more con-



ceited or more insupportable than a young Austrian whose father has an appointment at Court; they are inebriated with pride and presumption, and, as they feel they are rich, and their fathers great personages, they imagine that they can despise every one, and neglect polite and good manners, which would be in keeping with their birth. . . . A craving of the Austrian gentry of all the Hereditary States of the Emperor is to bear the title of Count. Gentlemen buy it, and beg for it as a great favour. . . . Gentlemen, by the by, are so common that one never meets any one else . . . the late courier of the Emperor Joseph bought the title of Baron, and his children are beginning to mingle in the *grand monde*."

Upon the Emperor's return from the war in Spain, many Spaniards who had attached themselves to him at Barcelona came with him, and he loaded them with marks of gratitude for their late services.

Pöllnitz's insatiable love of pleasure and excitement was again to work him ill. Though now equipped with the means to take up his post in Sicily, he lingered in Vienna to see two great spectacles, the arrival of the Turkish ambassador and the marriage of the Emperor's niece, daughter of the late Emperor Joseph, with the Electoral Prince of Saxony.

"The Turkish Court was not very much"; there was a certain oriental magnificence of tents and drapery, and of fine men, but the escort was ill dressed and the carriages shabby. The camp where the ambassador stayed was ten miles outside the city; it was all in confusion, camels, horses, oxen, all pell-mell, servants dirty and half-dressed. Pöllnitz and some friends "drove out to the camp . . . sat on crimson satin and gold-embroidered cushions and fine carpets, and were given coffee and jam."

The ambassador and his suite, with horse-tail standards, defiled in procession solemnly through the city, and the Emperor and Empress watched them

from La Favorite palace. They lodged at a house in the suburbs, "for, according to a custom easily explained, no Turkish ambassador ever stays in Vienna."

The Turks flooded the wine-shops during their ambassador's stay, every day creating disturbances and giving the inhabitants unpleasant surprises. Pöllnitz, one morning, watched one enter St. Stephen's Cathedral. Mass was over, and he wandered aimlessly about, noticing everything. Especially was he struck by a fine lamp over the middle of the choir. Finally he pulled it down by its rope, took a long pipe out of his pocket, and lit it at the sacred lamp, which he again pulled back into place!

Much more to the Baron's liking was the Imperial wedding. He describes every detail of the ceremonies, from the entry of the Saxon and Polish ambassadors, to ask for the Archduchess's hand, the Princess's renunciation of the succession, to the arrival of the bridegroom, his meeting with the Empress and the bride at a convent, to the great marriage solemnity itself, in the court chapel, followed by a state banquet. The next evening there was a gala performance of a new opera, which Pöllnitz thought "very dull, too long, and, besides, it was awfully hot." Then another state banquet, and the departure of the bridal pair for Dresden.

Whither Pöllnitz must foolishly follow them! He had not had enough of *spectacles*—he never had! Moreover, soldiering in Sicily means exile from court life of any description. He must have a final "fling."

"When the Princess had gone, I thought of the long journey before me to join my regiment in Sicily, and, as it would naturally take me away from my native land, I wished first to settle my affairs. So I asked for a month's leave, and went to Dresden, ordering my man of business to meet me there. I preferred to stay at Dresden rather than Berlin, not only on account of the arrival of the Princess, which I was very glad to see, but because my enemies at the Prussian Court

might have set some wheels in motion to make mischief with the King about me."

Pöllnitz reached Dresden the same day as the bridal pair, who had come down the Elbe in a magnificently appointed gondola, modelled on the *Bucentaure* of Venice. He gives a minute account of the receptions, processions, fêtes, balls, wild-beast fights, operas, plays, banquets, etc., with which Augustus was delighted to welcome an Emperor's daughter as his son's bride, surpassing himself in the magnificent entertainments he was such an adept at arranging.

When all was over Pöllnitz was obliged to hurry away to Munich to place himself in the hands of a surgeon for the old trouble. The Elector's own doctor treated him, but Pöllnitz hardly took care of himself. He went out hunting with the Princes and the Comte de Charolais, who was still lingering at Maximilian's Court.

These four young men made up a party to go and see a new Italian opera which the Archbishop of Salzburg was producing on his birthday. The two Princes went on ahead, and put up at a poor inn in the suburbs, because they wished to be incognito. Charolais and Pöllnitz left at eight o'clock at night, with only one gentleman. Driving all night, they reached Salzburg the following evening and got down at the same inn. At once they went to the opera, which had already begun.

For this Pöllnitz was sorry—

"For it deserved to be seen as a whole. Never have I seen anything so extraordinary: theatre, actors, play, all supremely comic. The hall was crammed, and the actors' heads nearly touched the ceiling. . . . What amused me the most was the *entr'actes*, played by the Archbishop's pages. The first was of shepherds. One recognized them by their dress; they carried crooks, and, from time to time, sheep appeared upon the stage. The next was of hunters; they had hunting-horns, and, while some danced, others, with machinery, made hare-skins stuffed with straw skip about. The third

was of fishermen, who carried long lines to which trout were fastened ; others carried nets full of live fish . . . a unique performance. . . . Meanwhile, large goblets of wine or beer were handed round. The Princes were much amused by this piece, and for a long time could not forget the Archiepiscopal play. As for me, I cannot think of it without laughing.”

Despite their incognito, the arrival of the Princes was made known to the Archbishop, who sent to invite them to supper. Charolais declined, and so the others did not like to accept, which grieved Pöllnitz, “ for a look round the wretched inn where we were did not promise much, and I should have been delighted to go to the Archbishop’s.”

However, they paid a short, informal visit to the great ecclesiastical Prince in his huge and splendid palace, which took thirty-two years in building, full of beautiful marble halls with superb rock-crystal chandeliers and lustres, rich furniture, fine damasks, plate, pictures, portraits, bronzes. The stables, finer than those of Versailles, held a hundred and fifty horses, and there was a riding-school, quite unique, cut out of the solid rock upon which Salzburg is built ; it had two tiers of boxes for spectators, like a Roman amphitheatre.

Then back, starving, to the inn, for Charolais and Pöllnitz had tasted nothing for twenty-four hours. “ A dish of crabs, an ill-cooked hare, sent back to be made into a ragout—and even that the cook did not seem to be able to manage—two ducks, and four thrushes, completed the frugal repast, which, however, lasted far into the night.”

Then the Princes went to bed, but Charolais and Pöllnitz started back for Munich at once, going round by Alt Ottringen to see the treasures in the miraculous Chapel of the Virgin there. “ We could boast of having travelled three days and three nights, and of having done forty German leagues to see the most wretched opera that can be imagined.”



Needless to say that this wild goose chase did Pöllnitz a great deal of harm. We are not surprised, after this escapade, to hear that the Munich surgeons declined to treat him any longer, and his friends advised him to go to Paris to La Péronie.

Pöllnitz was far from anxious to do this. He feared that if he delayed any longer to join his regiment he should get into trouble. But he was so ill that he decided to go to Paris, writing, however, to Count Stahrenberg, and promising to stay at Paris no longer than was necessary for his cure. "I do not know if my reasons appealed to him, for I received no reply."

## CHAPTER XV

“FOR the first time in my life I started on the journey to Paris with regret.”

Pöllnitz no longer cared for the gay city which had once so enchanted him; “the failure of all my schemes had disgusted me with it.”

The surgeon, La Péronie, however, set him right in a month. “My friends came to keep me company whilst I was laid up, and from them I heard astounding news, of which, indeed, I had been informed by letter, but which I could hardly believe.”

The craze for speculation, the greatest, maddest, the world has ever seen, had reached its zenith. “It is an incredible thing,” writes Madame, “the immense wealth now in France. People only talk in millions. I do not know anything about it, but I see that the god Mammon reigns despotically in Paris.”

Pöllnitz sings of the great god Law, and the frenzy his system had excited.

### BREVET

#### DE CONTRÔLEUR GÉNÉRAL DES FINANCES

POUR LE SR. JEAN LAW

DE par le Dieu Porte-marotte,  
Nous Général de la Calotte,  
Attendu que le Régiment  
Est obligé sensiblement  
Au Sr. Law de qui la science  
Et conduite dans la Finance  
Nous a donné maints Calotins,  
En inventant les Bulletins,  
Autrement dits Billets de Banque,  
Pour servir au jeu de la Blanque,  
Jeu non renouvelé des Grecs,

Comme le fade jeu de l'Oye,  
 Mais imaginé tout exprès  
 Pour exciter l'homme à la joie ;  
 Témoins les plaisans vivement,  
 Et continuels changemens  
 Que l'on a vu dans le Royaume,  
 De Quinquempoix et de Vendôme,  
 Et Principauté de Soissons.

Où l'Achat et le Dividende  
 Causoient une rumeur si grande,  
 Qu'on ne vit jamais tant de rats  
 Obséder gens de tous états ;  
 Mari, femme, garçon, et fille,  
 Laquais, servante, la famille,  
 En un mot, sans rien excepter  
 Venoit jouer et blanqueter,  
 Et s'y portoit de telle sorte,  
 Qu'il falloit Gardes à la porte  
 Pour renvoyer chacun chez soi,  
 Après les trois coups de Beffroi,  
 Là de tout Pays et Provinces,  
 Marchants, Magistrats, Artisans,  
 Prélats, Guerriers, et Courtisans,  
 Ducs et Pairs, et même des Princes,  
 Nom du Pays, mais bien forains,  
 Accouroient comme des Essains,  
 Malgré vent, grêle, pluys et crotte,  
 Pour y jouer à la marotte,  
 En beaux et bons deniers comptant,  
 Contre des valeurs calotines,  
 Dont la France et Terres voisines  
 Se pourront souvenir long-tems.

A ces causes, vu l'abondance  
 Des Calotins qui sont en France  
 De tous rangs et de tous états,  
 Par le moyen dudit Sieur Las,  
 Nous lui confions nos Finances.  
 Voulons que sur ses Ordonnances  
 Nos Fonds soient economisiez,  
 Augmentez et réalisez ;  
 Afin que selon son mérite  
 Chacun ait part, grosse ou petite,  
 Dans nos immenses Revenus,  
 Tant de gros Fonds que des menus.  
 Or comme un pareil Ministère  
 Est fort étendu dans sa sphere,  
 Lui donnons pour premier Commis,  
 Nom par, qui, des moins endormis,  
 Connôit la manœuvre diverse  
 De la Finance et du Commerce.  
 Lui donnons pour profits et Droits,



THE CHÂTEAU OF VERSAILLES.

From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.





Pensions, Gages et Salaires,  
 Le quart de tous les angles droits  
 Que couperont les Commissaires  
 Au papier qui sera visé,  
 Et duquel un homme avisé  
 Il a si bien grossi le nombre,  
 Que la France y seroit à l'ombre,  
 Si tous les Billets rassemblez,  
 Et les uns aux autres celles  
 On en pouvoit faire une Tente ;  
 Au surplus de la-dîte rente  
 Lui donnons notre grand Cordon,  
 Passant de la droite à la gauche,  
 Ainsi qu'une légère ébauche  
 De sa droiture, dont le fond  
 Va si loin, que Terrasson même  
 Grand Calculateur du système,  
 Ne pourroit pas le mesurer.  
 En outre, pour mieux honorer  
 Le Chef de ce grand Personage  
 Qui fit bouquer tout homme sage,  
 En soit disant docte et profound  
 Lui donnons calotte de plomb,  
 De la haute et première classe ;  
 Et pour surcroît de telle grâce,  
 Joignons à ces Coqs dont la voix  
 Chanta la justice aux Français,  
 Papillons, Rats et Girouettes,  
 Hannetons, grelots et sonnettes.  
 En mémoire d'un si beau chant,  
 Qu'au sortir de France on publie  
 Qu'il va chanter en Italie,  
 Où sans doute il aura beau champ  
 Pour exercer son grand génie,  
 Et connoissance infinie  
 Dans l'art d'écupler les Fonds  
 Par Billets payable à vuë,  
 Desquels aujourd'hui nous voyons  
 En France une si bonne issuë.  
 Ordonnons à tous les Pays  
 De notre vaste dépendance,  
 De l'écouter dans ses avis,  
 Surtout dans l'Art de la Finance ;  
 Art qu'il possède éminemment,  
 Fait au Conseil du Régiment.

"There was no longer in Paris," writes a contemporary, "either business or society. The artisan in his shop, the merchant in his counting-house, the magistrate and the literary man in his study, were occupied only with

the price of shares. The news of the day was their rise and fall. People asked what it was before bowing to each other. There was no other conversation in the clubs, and the game of shares had replaced every other. . . . Like gamblers, people were merciless and cruel. One who had just been ruined by a fall did not hesitate to cut his friend's throat by suggesting to him, before he was aware of their fall, to take some shares. There were suicides, murders, and all the crimes which cupidity and despair can produce."

The Rue Quincampoix was "the hub of the universe. It was enough to get near that happy street in order to make one's fortune." It was almost unapproachable; the offices of the Mississippi Company were in a state of siege. The Duke of Bourbon, his mother, and the Prince of Conti, whose gains amounted to millions, "do not stir from the Rue Quincampoix," writes Madame.

About the Prince an epigram ran over Paris :

"Prince, dites-nous vos exploits,  
Que faites-vous pour votre gloire ?  
Taisez-vous, sôts ! Lisez l'histoire,  
De la Rue Quincampoix."

Lord Stair, the English ambassador, abused Law and his system, but made thousands of pounds out of it. The Duc d'Antin, one of Louis XIV's legitimized Princes, gained the most of all the royalties, but Saint-Simon says he cheated.

Madame writes that her son was seeking a Duchess "to accompany his daughter, bride of the Prince of Modena, to Genoa. Some one who happened to be present said to him : 'If you desire to have a choice of Duchesses, Monsieur, why not go to Law's ? You will find them there all assembled together.'"

As it was impossible to get into the offices of the Company—

"A hunchback, whose hump formed a gentle slope, hired it out as a desk for people to sign their names on, and in a short time made fifty thousand crowns. . . . It would be difficult to describe the kind of frenzy which seized people's minds at the sight of the fortunes made with as great a rapidity as they were enormous. One who had begun with one Billet d'État, by means of exchanges for money, for shares, for other *billets*, in a few weeks found himself with millions. The Rue Quincampoix, a long and narrow street, was the rendezvous of the shareholders and the scene of their mania. On Monday one saw servants arrive behind their master's coach, and on Saturday return inside it. The crowd was so great that many persons were stifled.

The air was full of lampoons and verses over these lightening-made fortunes.

"Lundi je pris des actions,  
Mardi je gagnai des millions,  
Mercredi je pris équipage,  
Jeudi j'arrangai mon ménage,  
Vendredi je m'en fus au bal,  
Et Samedi à l'hôpital."

"Depuis qu'un Juif venu d'Ecosse,  
S'est enrichi de notre argent;  
Tous les grédins roulent carosse,  
Et qui fut riche est indigent."

"The population has diminished lately in Paris," wrote Madame, in February 1720. "The high prices have caused many to leave. Gold and silver are worth nothing, notes and tenpenny coins are the only things accepted. I am thoroughly tired of hearing millions, shares, business, subscriptions, talked of round me. Every one in France is fearfully grasping, with the exception of my son . . . all the others, especially the Princes and Princesses of the Blood, are frightfully self-interested. They even fought hand to hand with the clerks belonging to the Bank of France. There is a saying that money rules the world; this is certainly true of this place,"



“People no longer talk except in millions,” chronicles Pöllnitz. “Some one who is a lackey to-day finds himself a great lord on the morrow. It is enough merely to show oneself in the celebrated Rue Quincampoix in order to be favourably looked upon by the tutelary Divinity, and you do not leave without immense wealth.”

Of course the Baron was badly bitten by the prevailing craze.

“I was advised to do as the rest did, and to see if luck would be always against me. I was told by name of a number of people who really possessed millions now, and who had come to the Rue without anything. This was exactly my case. The hope of success tempted me to try my luck, directly I was well enough to go out.

“I put in an appearance, and joined the ranks of the votaries of chance. I began excellently, and, without exactly knowing how it happened, I found myself in a little while with a large sum. I dare not tell you how much it amounted to, for I must have been mad not to be satisfied with it. But, anyhow, I began well!

“I should have thought it cowardly not to increase my shares. So I went on in my usual way, but soon felt that I had made a grievous mistake in not withdrawing; my millions gradually disappeared in the same way that they had come; that is to say, without my knowing the why or the wherefore, and I found myself empty-handed. Evidently it was compulsory to me to abandon finance.”

So, directly he felt himself able to travel, Pöllnitz left Paris to go to Sicily. Not well enough to post, he went by easy stages to Dijon.

“The desire to drink good wine had brought me down the road by Dijon, instead of the high road to Lyons by Tarare. My greediness was rewarded as it deserved. I was taken in, and I have not had a good glass of wine

in any inn on my road, which otherwise has been pleasant enough."

The ancient capital of Burgundy, of which the Duc de Bourbon, M. le Duc, was Governor, Pöllnitz found dull :

"I have seen many smaller towns gayer and pleasanter. There was a public concert, to which I went *malgré moi* ; I had a feeling that it would be none of the best, and I was only too right. The hall was splendid and the company large and good, and the concert would have been very good, too, had there been any musicians. One might call it a notable *charivari*."

Rameau and Lully in Paris, had made Pöllnitz critical.

Pöllnitz was pointed out the prison of the Duchess of Maine. Fallen from her proud position, "the little devil of a dwarf," as Madame, exasperated over the plot against her son, called her, was "reduced," says the Baron, "to live in a *vilain château*, her only company her waiting-women." What a change from the hilarious delights of the *nuits blanches* at Sceaux, her entertainments which Pöllnitz had so often enjoyed !

Through the luxuriant vineyards of Burgundy Pöllnitz drove to Chalons. Here he found a diligence for Lyons, along "as beautiful a road as one could see, running on the banks of the Saône, with views as charming and diversified as one can imagine."

On reaching Lyons Pöllnitz, in the absence of the Governor, the Duc de Villeroi, was taken to the Provost of the Merchants, who was next in authority—

"Not because he is particularly gracious to strangers who arrive by post. One is taken to his quarters and examined as if one was on the stool of repentance. I was obliged to conform to this custom, and he made me wait a long time in an anteroom filled with all sorts of

people ; at last he made his appearance, with an air of authority to which he was not born. The questions he put me and my replies were most laconic, and I fancy he was not more pleased with me than I with him. The office is changed every three years, but when the holder has been agreeable to the Court he is usually confirmed in his appointment. The passing grandeur of these gentlemen should naturally make them less proud. Strip them of their office and they are only like an actor who has just discarded the Roman Toga, in which he has been playing Mithridates or Pyrrhus."

The Baron was as much pleased with M. Poultier, the High Steward, as he had been annoyed by Périchon, the Provost. With the former he exchanged calls and, during the four days he stayed at Lyons, he spent the evenings at his house, seeing the best company in the city—

"Where there is good society, but very little aristocracy. When a stranger is once known he can find amusements, the Lyonnais are friendly and estimable, and not too devoted to commerce to neglect fine manners. They are very hospitable, and live well. They love cards, are not indifferent to the fair sex, and still less to wine. The play is passable, and as much patronized as if it were good. The actresses nearly all have luck in this town, and if they do not accumulate money, at least they collect a fine wardrobe. In the drawing-rooms of these ladies a captain is obliged to give precedence to a counter-jumper.

"There is an old actress here who, for forty years, has been the joy of the greater part of Lyons. People with good taste would like to see her banished from the theatre ; but there is no way of preventing this aged beauty from exhibiting her antique charms. She is the manageress of the theatre, which brings her in twenty-five thousand livres a year. They wanted to reduce this salary which, in reality, could have been better spent ;

but Mademoiselle Marez—that is the matron's name—represented that she could not live on less than twenty to twenty-five thousand livres a year ; that, her lover not being in a position to provide her with more than eleven thousand, she would be an outcast were her salary reduced. Such cogent reasons prevailed, and it was deemed unnecessary to drive Mademoiselle M. to extremities. A great lady of the province, who was here, remarked jokingly, on hearing that the Marez' lover only gives her eleven thousand a year : ' Oh ! the wretch ! She must be burnt ! She takes the bread out of the mouths of more than fifteen honest women ! ' ”

Pöllnitz took boat down the Rhine by Vienne, Valence, Pont S. Esprit, to Avignon—" the charming and fertile country seemed to lack nothing but inhabitants." He posted to Aix, the capital of Provence, and stayed five or six days, enjoying the beautiful town, the seat of an archbishop, a university, and a parliament, and its walks and squares with avenues and fountains, " where the nobility live in good style, with card-parties and promenades, and, on certain days, concerts—strangers allowed to enter gratis, the performers being paid by a certain number of people of position who keep up the orchestra." Yet how Madame de Sévigné, the century before, had pitied her daughter, exiled as the wife of the Governor of Provence !

The situation of Marseilles delighted Pöllnitz, and its fine harbour, great inner basin, with the forts defending it, and the Arsenal. In the harbour lay the King's galleys, with their unhappy inmates, who did nearly all the work of the port, says Pöllnitz, loading and unloading the ships. " Some were free to walk and trade in the town, but were obliged to pay a man to escort them, and to return to sleep on board. Others, with great crimes to their account, are chained, two and two, or four and four, which, however, does not entirely hinder them from earning their living by work." As for Pöllnitz, he enjoyed Marseilles, its look of opulency—



“in few places do you get such good food, or does a gentleman wish to pass his time more pleasantly . . . theatres, concerts, promenades. . . .”

In the country round lay over two thousand little houses called *bastides*, surrounded by vineyards and lovely gardens. Hither, he was told, most of the inhabitants retired during the last epidemic of the plague in Provence, which lasted long enough to kill a great part of the people. The devastation would have been worse had not the Regent arranged to place Marseilles in quarantine.

Like his modern compatriots, Pöllnitz fully appreciated the Sunny South. He thought Provence—

“A splendid country, and a beautiful spot to stay in, at any time, but especially in the winter. It is just then that the weather is finest, and one sees days which may really be called summer days. I remember walking on the quay at Marseilles at this season for two or three hours, and having been obliged to go in on account of the heat. Yet I noticed that a few days later a wind blew (the people of the country call it the Mistral) which is very cold, and I felt it all the more as it is not easy to get warm in this country. All their fuel consists of roots and branches of olive-trees, which do not make a good fire. Moreover, most of the rooms, especially at the inns, have no chimneys, so that one is obliged to use a brazier, which is very uncomfortable for those not used to warming themselves in this way.”

After vainly looking for a vessel sailing direct to Sicily, “and finding it impossible to discover one,” the Baron decided to take one to Genoa or Livorno. He was told that the passage was nothing, and only took a few days. But a contrary wind kept the ship a fortnight in harbour, and when they did set sail they only made the little harbour of La Cieuta in Provence. For three days Pöllnitz waited for a favourable wind to continue his voyage, and then decided to leave his trunks and

his servants on board and to proceed by land. He slept at Toulon, where he found a polite welcome at the Assembly-room of the naval officers; then, in four days, by way of Fréjus and Antibes, he reached the King of Sardinia's frontier on the Var, at Nice. Here he noticed "the first orange-trees, in the open fields, bearing fruit summer and winter"—so different from the specimens to which he was used in the orangeries of kings' palaces.

As the weather was fine, Pöllnitz was advised to take boat at Nice, "in order to avoid the bad roads over the mountains," of La Turbie. In his day the Corniche road did not exist, and only mule-tracks connected the various little ports of the Ligurian coast.

So he—

"Got into a little bark, guided by only two men. I soon repented having done this, for, half an hour after my embarkation, a storm arose which nearly caused me to perish, and it was only by a kind of miracle that I landed at Villafranca, which is only remarkable for containing the King of Sardinia's six galleys.

"There was an awful storm the night I spent in the town. The next day the weather grew calmer, but the sea was too rough and I would not risk myself. The day following seeming to me as fine as one could wish, I put out to sea, only to find myself again in a similar peril to that which I had gone through. The winds, or rather all the devils, were let loose against me. I confess that I was terribly frightened, especially when I saw my conductors lose countenance. Nevertheless, I put on a brave face, and showed them that the danger was not so great as they fancied, and that we must not lose heart. Anyhow, I do not quite remember what it was that I said to them; perhaps my harangue was not as clear as if I had been on *terra-firma*. However, I arrived safely at Monaco."

How Pöllnitz would have enjoyed staying there a century and a half later! But he passed on to San

Remo, the first town in the Genoese Republic, and took boat to Savona. Here he was—

“So bored by the sea that I took mules to reach Genoa. Two-thirds of the way are hardly practicable; one is continually going up and down hill, which is very fatiguing. The only pleasure I found was that one was always on the edge of the sea, which was covered with vessels and was a fine sight. When you arrive within a few leagues of Genoa the journey becomes very pleasant; for the road is quite level, and one sees a great number of fine houses, with gardens and terraces which form as fine an amphitheatre as one can see, all the way to Genoa.”

The situation of La Superba, of course, struck Pöllnitz, while the streets of splendid palaces, “galleries rather than streets,” appealed to his love of architecture. But—

“When you go into some of the finest and largest of these palaces, you do not find a soul in them. It appears that sometimes there are no servants, and that one has difficulty in discovering the master of the house; indeed, the great houses of Genoa are real deserts except on certain reception-days. These are held every evening, sometimes at one nobleman’s and sometimes at another’s. The apartments are then splendidly lit up, and a profusion of all sorts of refreshments are served. It is in these sort of assemblies and in a poor Italian opera that the amusements of Genoa consist, so that a stranger has ample time to be bored. Moreover, there are few meals given, the foreign envoys, who generally are those who entertain most, conforming to the local characteristic at Genoa, which is not to give any one anything to eat or drink. In my time it was only the English envoy who did not follow this custom, and he delighted in having people at his house. . . . There is more society in Genoa than at Venice; the nobles are more accessible there.

"I do not think that those who accuse the Italians of jealousy can possibly include the Genoese. In few countries in the world have the women more liberty; nor do they sin more—at least, in appearance."

"Sea without fish, mountains without trees, men without faith, women without shame," runs the Tuscan saying of Genoa and the Genoese.

"A woman," chronicles our Baron, "must possess few charms to have only two or three declared lovers—*cicisbei*, they are called. These men never leave their ladies, and make love rather uncomfortably, being obliged to trot along by the side of the sedan-chair of their mistress, so that it is by the sweat of their brows that they earn a glance from the fair one. There are ladies who have even five or six adorers, who accompany them everywhere. What is lucky is that all these rivals live in good understanding. It is true that, if they took to quarrelling, they would be obliged to resort to fisticuffs, for the nobility do not carry swords.

"They are dressed like the lawyers in France; but they always wear short silk mantles, and I wish that Messieurs the Councillors of Parliament in France would do the same, in order to distinguish them from tailors and counter-jumpers. . . . The people of quality dress well here, and the Genoese of either sex are much better-looking than the Florentines or the Romans, and they have a courtly air which is not usual among the Italians. In general, the Genoese have *savoir-vivre*, and never commit a solecism.

"I was very happy in this town. I went to two receptions given on the occasion of the marriage of a nobleman; and I have never seen anything more splendid; kings could not have given anything more magnificent. I was introduced by the Emperor's envoy, the Conte Guiciardi."

The Baron was lucky enough to be in Genoa during the election of a new Doge. The office is held for two



years, for "the Doge of Genoa is a living example of the mutability of human greatness," and Pöllnitz gives an account of the solemn procession on foot to the cathedral, the city fathers in black velvet robes, and the religious ceremony, followed by what was, for that period, "a very great banquet, of three hundred people."

But far more interesting was the arrival in Genoa of the great Cardinal Alberoni after his disgrace. The Republic sent a galley to fetch him from Spain, and Pöllnitz witnessed his landing. He received a gracious reception, and fancied himself in safety. "But," as he said, "I have lost the friendship of the King and gained the enmity of the Pope!" And he fled into hiding in Switzerland.

After a stay of some time at Genoa, Pöllnitz went on to Salzana, among the vines and olives, and where a sergeant, on guard at the gate, asked alms of him, as a little tribute paid there by strangers. Thence to Pisa, where he saw the sights, and on, in a day, to Florence.

"One sees Florence from afar, and, indeed, it is a beautiful view, that of this fine city, in a lovely valley among hills which rise gradually till they culminate in high mountains; the hills are so populated that they may be considered as *faubourgs* of Florence. Through the city and valley flows the river Arno. Rightly is Florence, among all the towns of Italy, named The Beautiful, for it possesses everything that can be desired of a rich and prosperous large town."

Pöllnitz enlarges on the sights, especially on the churches, that of San Lorenzo, built as a mausoleum for the Medici, but then, after a hundred and fifty years, still unfinished.

The Baron was received by the aged Grand-duke, Cosmo III, in his splendid palace, to which Pöllnitz thought the descriptions did not do justice. He passed through the vast gallery, with its portraits, china,

antiques, and jewelled tables. But what jarred upon his naturally cheerful temperament were two models in wax, "of rare beauty; but the artist has chosen the saddest of subjects—one depicted a cemetery, and the other a village afflicted with the plague. One cannot look at these two pictures without feeling at the same time admiration and horror."

In the octagon-room, with the marble floor of different colours, the walls hung with red velvet, and the ceiling covered with mother-of-pearl, he saw the model of the Duchess's celebrated diamond. The gem itself, weighing a hundred and thirty-nine and a half carats, had been last exhibited, some ten years previously, and to the King of Denmark; since then only the model has been shown, "which led people to assume that the gem was no longer in Florence." In fact, many people told Pöllnitz that it had been sold to the Grand Signior (the Sultan).

The Baron was introduced by the Prime Minister, and found the Grand-duke alone in his room, standing leaning against a table lighted by two candles. Cosmo was a hale old man, with white hair and a charming manner—

"Which attracted the hearts and the veneration of all who approached him. . . . When I had saluted him he put on a cap, and begged me to cover myself. I implored him to allow me to remain uncovered in consequence of the deep respect that I had for His Highness. Whereupon he took up his hat and begged me to put on mine, which I did. directly he had covered himself . . . on the great principle," adds the Baron, who was a stickler for etiquette, "that private persons should maintain the posture demanded of them by princes. Yet I must confess that I felt some regret in talking to a Prince of that age, and of the rank of Grand-duke, with my hat on.

"The Prince began, before entering into conversation, by asking me if I spoke Italian."

The Baron replied that he spoke a little, but not enough to undertake to converse in that language in the presence of so great a Prince. The latter replied :

“ ‘ And I, I splutter a little French ! ’ yet did me the honour to talk to me a long time in that language, and with much kindness.”

The following day Pöllnitz was presented to the Grand Prince, who received him very kindly. He remembered seeing Fräulein von Pöllnitz at the late Queen’s at Berlin, and to have been to the house of Pöllnitz’s mother, Frau von Meinders, during his stay in Germany, where he had married a Princess Saxe-Lauenburg, widow of the Prince Palatine of Neuburg, brother of the Elector Palatine, while his sister had married the Elector Palatine, John William of Neuburg.

The Grand Prince received the Baron with much kindness and promised him all the protection he might require. Pöllnitz also paid his respects to the widowed Electress, who, childless, had returned to her father’s Court, where she lived in great seclusion, “ almost continually at her orisons.” She recollected the Baron’s visit to her at Düsseldorf, early in his wanderings, at the fine palace in the forest overlooking the Rhine, where he spent “ such a pleasant time,” and she loaded him with attentions and kindness.

From Florence Pöllnitz went to Rome by Siena. A midwinter journey over the Apennines was no trifle in those days, “ though the roads in the Tuscan States were well kept up, and an endeavour had been made to make them as practicable as possible, by smoothing the slope of the mountains. But when one enters the Ecclesiastical States the roads are terrible, and one can hardly get along.”

Bad weather and a heavy fall of snow detained the Baron at the post-house at Montefiascone.

“ At the same time there was such a gale and such terrible cold that the inhabitants told me that they had

never felt anything so violent. I had no difficulty in believing them, especially after what happened to me at the post-house.

"The postmaster showed me up into a great room, where I found two gentlemen, one an Italian and the other a German, coming from Rome, but forced like me, by the weather, to halt at Montefiascone. We began to talk over the fire. I became aware of a continuous movement, as if some one was rocking us. As I had never felt an earthquake, I thought it was one; but the Italian told me that the movement was too regular, and that it must come from some other cause.

"Indeed, after a few minutes we became convinced that it was the gale which was shaking us thus. As we were afraid of perishing among the ruins of the house, we asked the landlord to put us in another place where we should be less in danger of our lives. The man began to laugh over our fright, and, to reassure us, told us that for thirty years the house had shaken like this, without having been damaged.

"All these reasons did not convince me of the solidity of the house; on the contrary, in my opinion, thirty years of shaking ought to end in a speedy dissolution, and besides, as luck is always against me, it was prudent not to meet accidents half-way. So I decided to go downstairs, and the two gentlemen with me did the same, and our host led us to a house opposite; but only to be worse off.

"For the fire was no sooner lighted than we thought that we should be suffocated by the smoke. It was absolutely necessary to open the window to get some air; but the violence of the wind did not long allow of our remaining in this place, and we were obliged to change our abode a second time.

"We went into the town in the hope of being better off. We tumbled upon the most detestable inn in the world; nevertheless, we made up our minds to stay there, because, happily, there was a chimney which did not smoke. At first we imagined that we should recoup



ourselves for the cold we had felt in all these changes, but it was fated that we should not pass the day without encountering fresh disagreeables : the chimney caught fire. The town was alarmed, every one collected, and happily the fire was soon extinguished. But that did not prevent the people rising against us, and I fancied, for a moment, that we were going to be put in prison as incendiaries. But we escaped with only a fright and the scattering of some coin. But, in consequence of this tumult, we were forbidden to have a fire in our room, so that we had to put up with one in the dirtiest kitchen in the world."

## CHAPTER XVI

HALTING his post-chaise on a height above where the Tiber flows under the Ponte Mole, the Baron let his eyes revel over the first sight of the Eternal City, enjoying in prospect the delight of exploring its quarters.

Crossing the river, he drove along a paved road, bordered by gardens and by villas, and entered by the Porto del Popolo into the celebrated piazza with its twin churches and the famous obelisk of Sixtus X. Then came the custom-house. "Directly the clerks had finished turning my boxes upside down," he went on his way to the Piazza di Spagna, "with its fountain used as a drinking-trough," and put up at the Hôtel di Monte Doro.

Next day he took a guide, whom he calls "an antiquarian," and began at once to do the sights, which he describes at length, not omitting to mention—good German as he always is at heart—that the Vatican Library had been much enriched by the spoil of that of Heidelberg.

Next he paid calls, armed with letters of introduction from Florence, was received by a Duke and a Marquis (initials only given) with great civility, and introduced to the parties.

"At a Madame de B——'s I found a very fine gathering of ladies and cavaliers, and especially of good-looking Abbés, who could have given the most complete dandies points in the art of flirting. The ladies were very well dressed and mostly very agreeable, but not easy of access to those who had not the honour of wearing the *petit collet*—the clerical collar. The young

Abbés had taken care to get hold of them, so that it seemed out of one's power to approach them. Time passed in talking and in drinking much chocolate, after which we went into another room and began to play different games. It was then that I felt how very advantageous it would have been for me to be M. l'Abbé.

"Each of these gentlemen easily made up his game ; as for me, as no one did me the honour to offer me any cards, I found myself very idle, and, without my introducer, to whom I talked from time to time, I should have cut a very foolish figure. I did not think it advisable to wait for the end of this assembly, and was very pleased to find myself outside."

However, the Baron tried again. The Duke took him to another party. Here he found—

"The company not large, and moreover, quite as unamusing as the first into which I had been introduced. I found few ladies, again many Abbés, and hardly any gentlemen of the sword. I quite understood that the Roman receptions were none of the most amusing for a foreigner, and made up my mind to occupy myself with the sights of the city."

The Baron, however, was better pleased with Roman society at Cardinal Corsini's, to which he was taken by the Marquis A——. Every evening His Eminence held a reception, and welcomed Pöllnitz most graciously. "The Cardinal did the honours of his house perfectly, and was careful to see that every one was amused, either with cards or conversation," and each evening during his stay in Rome Pöllnitz did not fail to appear at his reception.

He found his lack of Italian and the Romans' little partiality for speaking French rather a handicap in society.

"Many ladies speak and understand French, but will not speak it, either from malice or timidity. One day

I addressed a rather pleasant lady ; I spoke French, as I did not know Italian then ; but she replied, in good French : ' I do not understand or speak French, Monsieur.' Then she turned aside, and, at that moment, I saw a good-looking Abbé enter, who talked to her in whispers all the evening. Apparently he spoke a language she understood.

"A Protestant Colonel in the French service, an Italian by birth, came often to see me in the mornings. One day he said to me that he saw that I had adopted French habits. I asked him why. He replied that it was because I changed my shirt daily.

"Slovenliness, however, is not general. People are as scented here as elsewhere, and a Roman dandy is quite as much the fop as a French one. True, they are rarer, because young men under twenty are not admitted into society here."

The Baron's next move was to be presented to the Pope. Clement XI was very old, but still wily. Dubois was haggling with him for the Cardinal's hat, but the Regent was not popular with His Holiness, exasperated with the long quarrels in France on the Bull *Unigenitus*, and "Paris was Jansenist to the core." So Pöllnitz did well to rely upon Imperial support.

"As a German, I made my call first on Cardinal de Giudice, who was in charge of the affairs of the Empire, and to whom I had introductions. His palace was one of the few with modern furniture. After waiting a few moments in his anteroom, I was introduced to his presence by one of his gentlemen. As the prelate was not well that day, I found him in a dressing-gown on a sofa. He rose when he saw me enter, and advanced a few steps to meet me. Then he sat down, and made me take an arm-chair opposite his sofa. When the audience was over he rose and led me to the door of his room. There I found two of his gentlemen, who escorted me to the grand staircase ; one went down with me and accompanied me to my coach."



The Baron also had an introduction to Cardinal Gualtieri, who gave him—

“A most obliging reception. He gave me audience in his study. After the first politenesses he sat in an arm-chair, and made me sit down also, and obliged me to put my hat on. This I was very loth to do, but at last I was obliged to comply, and remained in that condition for quite an hour. I was charmed with the manners of this prelate. Of all the Cardinals, he had least of the usual arrogance of Eminences. The kindness he showed me led me to make friends with him, and I paid my respects to him very assiduously all the time I was in Rome. He had me taken by one of his gentlemen to Cardinal Ottoboni, to whom I also had an introduction; he was protector of French interests. I found him in his study. He was standing when I came in, and remained so all the time of my visit; and I was escorted out, when I retired, in the same manner as at Cardinal del Giudice’s.”

Pöllnitz found an old acquaintance in another delightful prelate, Cardinal Grimani, “an ecclesiastic of great virtue, whose morals are sound, his manners simple and polite.” Pöllnitz had known him as Internuncio at Brussels, as Nuncio at Cologne, then in Poland, and at Vienna, where he was residing when raised to the purple. He had now come to Rome to receive his hat; and Pöllnitz found him the same as when only Internuncio. “Honours,” he says, “alter only mean souls.”

Having thus smoothed the way, the Baron was presented to the Pope by Cardinal Giudice.

“He had an audience alone before introducing me, after which I was told to enter. According to custom, I knelt in the door-way; then, rising, I advanced to the middle of the room, and was preparing for a second genuflection, but the Pope stopped me and beckoned to me to approach him, saying, ‘Avanti, avanti.’”

“ I obeyed. I advanced to his feet, knelt down, and kissed the embroidered cross on His Holiness’s slippers. The Pope gave me his blessing, and ordered me to rise. He did me the honour to talk to me a long time about my happiness in embracing the Catholic Religion ; he even inquired about some details of my conversion, and seemed to feel the grace which God had vouchsafed me so deeply that he could not help shedding a few tears.

“ He then asked for information about the state of religion in Germany, and he gave great praise to the Elector Palatine for the zeal he was evincing for the Catholic faith. He ended by exhorting me to remain firm on the side I had been happy enough to embrace. When he dismissed me His Holiness presented me with several *Agnus*, with two little medallions, one of gold and the other of silver, and with a dispensation to eat meat in Lent.”

Pöllnitz stayed at Rome over Easter. Thanks to Cardinal Gualtieri, he had an excellent place from which to view all the ceremonies of Holy Week. He notes how full the churches were—“crowded to suffocation”—but he did not think that the Italians attended them only for devotional purposes ; it seemed to him that the excellent music, rather than religion, was the attraction.

Immediately after Easter the Baron left Rome, with several other foreigners, by post, for Naples. Especially was he struck with the view from the balcony of the Viceroy’s palace there. “Never have I seen anything so extensive, nor so beautifully varied : the splendid gardens ; the harbour ; the Arsenal ; the high mountains ; terrible Vesuvius.”

Cardinal Schrottenbach, then Viceroy, was unpopular, “keeping a small and poorly attended Court,” and rarely appearing among a people who like to see a nobleman filling with pomp an office which they hold to be above all others.” Pöllnitz was told of a Neapolitan lady who, at an audience of the King of Spain,

told the latter that she hoped, as a crown of happiness, God would be pleased one day to make him Viceroy of Naples.

At Naples the Baron found Prince T——, whom he had known in Vienna, and who offered to take him to some parties, which offer Pöllnitz accepted with pleasure on the assurance that they would be unlike those at Rome. He made acquaintance with several Neapolitan nobles, who showed him the sights. Especially was he delighted with the magnificent promenade of the Chiaja, and the number of coaches, more French in appearance than those of Rome, except that they were drawn by mules, or very poor horses.

After driving a supper-party was suggested, and good fare and good company promised. Pöllnitz saw that they had not deceived him.

“The food was most delicate, and very agreeable ladies were of the party. I should have been really delighted to talk to them, but for lack of knowing Italian I could only converse by signs—a mode of conversation very uncomfortable, for people would have asked nothing better than to talk. After supper a game of faro was suggested. Prince T—— offered to deal, which he did with every possible ill luck; in a short time I saw him lose very large sums. For my part, I won two hundred and sixty pistoles, which he sent me next morning with a large basket of green peas and many fruits.”

Of course the Baron did not fail to visit “the terrible Vesuvius.”

“But when I found myself on the top of the dreadful mountains, I was very sorry to have come there. I thought I should have been rewarded for the trouble I had had in ascending it by the sight of something wonderful when I was on the summit. Not at all. I saw nothing but smoke coming out of several very large

holes, which it would have been unwise to approach. This I was not tempted to do, and I shortly afterwards went back as wise as I came. All that I noticed which was at all remarkable was that, in kicking one's foot against the ground, I heard a noise like that of an empty barrel. That is all that I can tell you about Mount Vesuvius.

"As for the shape of this mountain, it would be useless to describe it, as it changes every time it erupts. I had much more difficulty in descending than I had in ascending; the quantity of baked earth, calcined stones, bituminous matter, and cinders, made the descent so difficult that, when I reached the bottom, I could hardly get back to my horse. I noticed that the soft boots which I wore were quite burnt, doubtless by the sulphur and the lime of which this mountain is composed.

"I was told that it was a long time since there had been an eruption; but that one would occur shortly, because so many new craters were to be seen, and that the ground was sinking visibly. Such a neighbour struck me as being uncomfortable for such a large city as Naples; but the Neapolitans do not seem to think much about it. It is true that, directly the flames appear, they are no longer the same people. They run in crowds to the churches, every one is seen at their prayers, they solemnly promise to alter their lives; but, when they think themselves again in safety, they are as dissipated as ever. Like those strong-minded people who, when in good health, seem to despise death, but, when they feel it approaching, show signs of weakness which belie their assumed courage."

Pöllnitz drove through the famous tunnel of Possipippo, in which two coaches can pass, the drivers shouting in the darkness from time to time to avoid a collision. He saw the usual dog asphyxiated in the sulphureous Grotto del Cane, and was unimpressed with the ruins of Puzzuoli, "not a vestige of its ancient splendour. I do



not know why visitors make a sort of matter of principle to go there; there are nothing but old crumbling walls, which do not mean anything."

Pöllnitz was little of a classic, and archæology was not much to the taste of his century; but thirty years later his friend, the Margravine of Bayreuth, was scrambling on hands and knees about the ruins in ecstasy.

It will be remembered that Pöllnitz had written from Munich to his patron, Count Stahrenberg, the Commander-in-Chief, explaining the reason of the delay in his joining the regiment in Sicily to which Stahrenberg had posted him. Pöllnitz only waited in Naples long enough to receive a reply to a second letter he had sent to him in Sicily on arrival, "pleading that business of the utmost importance prevented me having the honour of joining him as soon as I should wish."

The truth was that several of his Neapolitan friends dissuaded him from the idea of soldiering in Sicily. The fighting was over, the Austrian troops only engaged in the dull monotony of occupying it. The letter in which Count Stahrenberg replied to Pöllnitz only confirmed the latter in his friends' view. "He took a tone which displeased me, and the lesson he was pleased to read me decided me not to lay myself open to receiving any more."

Pöllnitz was ever averse to discipline. He replied to Stahrenberg that he could "dispose of his commission, as his affairs did not permit of his taking service so soon." He then made up his mind to try his luck at the Court of Spain, which he had long wished to visit. However, he was not to find himself any happier there than in so many others.

## CHAPTER XVII

NEXT to Paris, Venice was the gayest city in Europe at this period. Not having found society in Rome and Naples sufficiently lively, the Baron was burning to see Venice again, and made up his mind to take it on his way to Spain. So he hurried back through the States of the Church, stopping at Loretto to see the magnificent church which contains the famous chapel which was the House of the Virgin.

“ One is surprised at first,” he writes sceptically, “ to find in Italy a house originally built in a country so remote from that which it inhabits to-day ; but, on hearing a little of its history, one is the more astonished, for, before finding its domicile in the Marches of Ancona, this house has changed its dwelling-place several times. First, from Nazareth, which was really its native country, it was borne, they say, by angels to Dalmatia, where it remained three years. After that time the angels caught it up a second time, and brought it to the territory of Recantati in the Marches of Ancona. But, as much was heard in those days of murders and brigandage in that country, the angels, alarmed at such a locality, caught up the house the third time, and placed it at a little distance from where it is now. But it did not long remain there, for the two brothers to whom the ground belonged on which it had been placed disputed so warmly as to who should be the master of it that the angels ended the quarrel by carrying the building to the spot where it is to be seen to-day.”

Pöllnitz visited the Treasury, with all the wonderful

gifts which countless pilgrims had showered upon the Holy House, and then left by Rimini for Bologna.

Here he stayed several days to see his old friend Cardinal Grimani, now governing Bologna, the second city of the Papal States, as Legate. A pleasant time he spent in "Bologna the Fat," so called because of the fertility of its soil. There were—

"Plenty of aristocracy, very forthcoming, fine pictures, excellent concerts, opera and theatre, delightful promenades, pleasant country-houses, all that one can desire in life. . . . One lives in better style and with more freedom than in other places in Italy, and, to express myself in one word as to what I think about this city, I would say that it is the only one I would live in had I to settle in Italy."

On starting for Venice Pöllnitz took the daily boat, called the *Messenger*, down the Reno—

"The most detestable means of conveyance which a gentleman can use; but one had to put up with it. Scarcely had we got under way, however, than, a few miles from Ferrara, the water became too low. All who were in the boat were landed, the baggage was put on to wagons, and we were made to get into a sort of coach, very like the French diligences. I felt a great repugnance to enter this equipage, whose exterior did not promise well. The driver seemed to have a little wine in his head, and, the horses he had to drive being extremely restive, required a coachman with all his wits, and a little more, about him."

However, there was no alternative except to do the rest of the journey afoot.

"We went off at a pace which made me very uneasy on the road, but our driver got well out of the most difficult places, and we rumbled along happily to Fer-

rara. But hardly had we entered the town than our driver, apparently wishful to exhibit his skill, whipped up his horses at the precise moment in which we were turning into a street; the horses, thus urged, wheeled with such impetuosity that, having taken too short a turn, a hind-wheel went over a rather high stone-post, and upset the coach so violently that two persons sitting next the door were killed instantaneously. As for me, I escaped with a blow on the head, which gave me a swollen cheek for a week or so. My servant, who was opposite me in the coach, had his wrist dislocated. Indeed, out of the eight souls that we were, not one but had some cause of complaint. What surprised me most was that I was the least hurt of them all; it is perhaps the first time that I have found some one more unfortunate than myself. As my swollen cheek did not permit of my promenading about Ferrara as I should have wished, I put my baggage on a boat, that took me to Venice, which I reached at midnight."

This was Pöllnitz's second visit to Venice. Thirteen years before he had been there to remove the body of his aunt, the Marquise Duhamel, from the lazaretto where she died, to Berlin for burial.

In consequence of his accident he was obliged to keep his room for a few days, but when he was fit to go out he went about the city as much on foot as in a gondola.

"This last way of travelling, though very smooth, is always alarming to people unused to it; one fancies one is often in danger of drowning, especially when one turns from one street to another. It seems as if one must be thrown into the canal, which, indeed, could well happen with less experienced oarsmen than the Venetian gondoliers."

Probably his recent accident must have shaken the Baron's nerves, never very strong. He evidently preferred to thread his way afoot through narrow alleys and



over the bridges, but especially did he like to walk in the Piazza, called the Broglio, where the aristocracy disported themselves in front of the Doge's palace. "This walk, not roofed in, and without any green grass, was yet very pleasant on account of the vicinity of the sea, which was always in sight, and which makes a charming *coup d'œil*. . . . The Venetians look upon the Adriatic as a possession which is specially their own," as is shown by the ancient custom of the Marriage of the Sea by the Doge on Ascension Day.

"The crowd of vessels, of galleys, of gondolas, coming and going, present a spectacle all the more amusing as it is very varied . . . and moreover, one can discern many little islands, inhabited only by the religious orders, who have fine churches and convents on them."

On this visit to Venice Pöllnitz did not see the Doge, who seemed to him "an imaginary Prince, and really the head slave of the Republic." He found the Venetian nobility "as scrupulous over political matters as the Romans over ceremonies." They even went so far, as Pöllnitz found by his own experience, as to have no intercourse with any one affecting the society of an ambassador.

". . . Politics, mistrust, suspicion, are the tyrants of the nobility of Venice, but still more of ambassadors, whom every one shuns as suspected persons, and whom a stranger can hardly associate with without giving up all intercourse with the nobles. Thus an ambassador is reduced to amusing himself in his own domesticity, or in the company of foreign visitors, of whom there are always a great many in this city. No nobleman may visit him without the express permission of the Senate."

The rise of the sea-power of England and Holland had shaken that of the Republic; she was jealous and

suspicious, and on her guard against the European Powers; while the Turks, having wrested the Morea from her, had curtailed her influence in the Mediterranean.

Now, as the Baron met in Venice Q——, whom he knew at the Hanoverian Court, and G——, whom he had met at Vienna, he imagined that, in order to be introduced into good houses, he could not do better than to call upon them. He did so, and was politely received; but when his visit was returned next day he perceived, in the course of a short conversation, that they had noticed that he much affected the society of the Imperial Ambassador, Count Colloredo, whose wife, a Blaspiel, had a brother in the household of the King of Prussia. The Baron, on his part, showed plainly that he had no mind to sacrifice the ambassador's house, where he met all that was most distinguished among the foreigners at Venice.

The visit of the Hereditary Prince of Modena, who was about to marry Mademoiselle de Valois, daughter of the Regent, and wished for a last little jaunt *en garçon*, was the excuse for—

“A sort of carnival, which gave the town an air it usually lacks. . . . Also it gave me the pleasure of seeing the Venetian ladies in all their finery; otherwise, I should have left without seeing a single one of them. The jealousy of their husbands keeps them nearly always shut up, and only at carnival time, or on fêtes, is it possible to see them. . . . I was surprised at the magnificence of these ladies, especially at the quantity of their jewels, for the rest of their costume had something, I know not what, rather extraordinary, such as is always to be seen in the dress of all Italians. They were very assiduous at the balls given for the Prince.”

A new form of amusement to Pöllnitz was the—

“Regatta, a race of little boats, in four quadrilles [squadrons?] distinguished by little flags of different

colours, each quadrille led by a large boat, richly gilt and painted. . . . These quadrilles competed one against the other to win a prize awarded to the one which arrived first. The Prince of Modena seemed very pleased with this fête."

Masquerades were more in fashion in Venice than elsewhere.

"People went masked to the promenade, to the play, to balls. It was the favourite amusement both of the grandees and of the populace, and led to adventures, and to making acquaintances which would otherwise have been difficult to pick up without this disguise."

Pöllnitz became acquainted on the Piazza of S. Mark with two ladies, among the highest in the land. They were masked, and the Baron wore a rather *voyant* rose-coloured domino, trimmed with silver, a costume but little seen in Venice. It attracted the attention of all the masqueraders in the square, among others that of these two ladies, one of whom pulled him by the sleeve, remarking :

"'Mask ! by your appearance, which surpasses that of our cavaliers, my friend and I know that you are a foreigner ; and we easily perceive that you are not a common man. We shall be delighted to talk to you, if you will take a turn on the Piazza with us. . . .'

"'You do me more honour than I deserve, fair Mask,' I replied, as I walked, 'and what you tell me about my appearance flatters me still more, as you yourself are quite the most perfect mask here. If my costume leads you to think that I am not a man of the people, your appearance convinces me that I have the honour to address ladies of quality. . . .'

"'You are not mistaken,' the lady replied to me, 'the Mask you see with me is Madame M——, and I am the wife of Monsieur C——. You see,' she continued,

‘ that we bear names not unknown in Venice. But, after having told you who we are, may we ask what your name is ? ’

“ I satisfied their curiosity by taking off my mask, as I thought it due to their position. Scarcely had I mentioned my name than the lady to whom I had not yet spoken, said to me : ‘ You are not such a stranger to us as you fancy ; your name is very well known to me, and the late Madame Duhamel, your aunt, whose husband was generalissimo of our troops, was one of my greatest friends, and often confided to me how she wished to have you near her. This comfort was denied her ; she followed her husband to Corfu, where he died, not without suspicions that he had been poisoned. He was accused of being too good a Frenchman. Your aunt died while undergoing quarantine in our port, having returned from Corfu with the intention of ending her days in Berlin. You bore her body thither, and you were one of her heirs. Without wishing to seek your gratitude, I will tell you that it is to my good offices that you owe this inheritance ; I took your part against an infinite number of the Marquise Duhamel’s relations. The affection I had for your aunt led me to persuade M. M—— to interest himself on your behalf ; he was successful, and induced the Senate to prefer the recommendations of the King of Prussia and the Elector of Hanover, who were protecting you, to the solicitations which the Ambassador of France was making in the name of his master for the Messieurs Duhamel. I was delighted,’ Madame M—— continued, ‘ to have been able to do you this service, and you can rely upon it that M. M—— and I will always be deeply interested in all those who belong to our deceased friend.’

“ I replied to M. M—— in the strain which the kind things she had said to me demanded, and I asked her permission to come and pay my respects to her. She replied charmingly that she would send her husband to me, and then, after that, she would, with much pleasure, receive me at her house. The next morning,



as I was ready to go out to M. M——'s, to whom I thought I owed a visit after the kind things his wife had said to me, I was told that he was at my door, asking to see me. I went to meet him and found him as civil as his wife. He suggested that he should take me to see some of the sights of Venice till it was time to go to his wife. We went to see some churches together. He then conducted me to his house, where I found Madame M——, who received me with every possible politeness.

“She was a woman of about forty, but who had many remains of beauty. With her was Madame C——, with whom she had been on the Piazza of S. Mark the evening before. I have never seen a more beautiful creature, and one with such distinguished manners. She was still under twenty, and had been married five years before to the ugliest of men; but who had contrived, by his pleasant ways, to make her love him.

“I fell in love with Madame C—— directly I saw her, and, when I saw her husband, I was presumptuous enough to imagine that my attentions might not be disagreeable to the lady. But it was not long ere I perceived that she was not the sort of woman to listen to me; I had to abandon all hope, and, as hope is a lover's only sustenance, I ceased to be in love directly I had no more hope. I cast my nets in another direction, and with more success.

“M. M—— took me to a country-house he had near Padua. I do not think I ever enjoyed myself so much. One should see the Venetians at these country-houses. They are quite different from what they are in the town; they cast off the grave and serious manner they affect, and live in better style, are sociable, polite, well-bred. As these country-houses are near each other, the gentlemen to whom they belong visit each other a great deal, and one is almost always together. It is not quite the same in Venice, where one lives under more restraint.”

Pöllnitz had been rowed up to Padua, through the

fertile plain, by the same gondolier he had hired during his stay in Venice. Says the local proverb: "Bologna la grassa, Padua la passa" (Bologna is fat, but Padua surpasses it). But, during a hurried visit, it was chiefly the diet and the poor architecture which struck Pöllnitz, though he thought the churches fine. He passed on to Ferrara, through the Marches of Padua, the roads very bad. With enormous difficulty he reached Ferrara, where he took boat, afraid of the roads to Bologna. He left the latter place the same day that he arrived, reaching Modena by an easy road through a pleasant country.

The Baron went to pay his respects to the Duke, who was connected by marriage with the Emperor, and who was still in mourning for the latter's mother, the Empress Eleanor, who had died since Pöllnitz left Vienna. "The Duke received me standing," writes the Baron, with his keen eye for etiquette, and also for what was due to his rank, "and directly I had saluted him put on his hat, and absolutely compelled me to do the same. He talked for some time with much kindness, and I was very well pleased with my audience."

Modena he found dirty and ill-paved; the high street the only passable one. The Duke's palace was still in building, and a suite of apartments there preparing for Mademoiselle de Valois, the Regent Orleans's daughter, who had been married by proxy to the Hereditary Prince, and to whom it was intended to give a fine reception.

We hear much of this young lady, the flighty daughter of a vicious father, from the frank pen of her grandmother, Madame. How, from a pretty child, she grew up plain, "with a great aquiline nose," which, her grandmother thought, came from being allowed to take snuff too early; of how, like her notorious sister, the Duchesse de Berri, she continually overate herself; of how, at seventeen, she had grown up "entirely deceitful, rarely truthful, and a frightful flirt," and likely "to cause us much sorrow still." There had been talk of marrying her to her cousin, the Prince of Sardinia, but

then came that "horrible flirtation" with "that devil, the Duc de Richelieu, ugly little fop; all the Paris women run after him . . . the *archidébauché*, a good-for-nothing, a coward, false, and a liar," boasting of his amours real and imaginary. He had left the Princess's letters to him, making assignations, lying about, and all the young men had read them. Next she wished to marry her cousin, the Comte de Charolais, but that could not be managed, for "all the Princes and Princesses of the Blood, who are related, hate each other like the devil." Very averse had been the bride to this Modena match; her grandmother pitied her "with all her soul," but the Prince, a weak, nervous young man, was very pleased with her portrait; she had good eyes and skin, but prominent teeth, and a bad figure and gait, says Madame; "some days ugly, some days good-looking." However, the present of fine diamonds from Modena, and the sight of her forty new dresses, somewhat comforted her. Madame wished the marriage had taken place some years before, though "we shall not die of grief when she leaves."

But, though the marriage by proxy took place in the late winter, and Modena was all agog with preparations to receive her, the bride was in no hurry to arrive, determined to make the most of the small chance to travel which fell to the lot of even royal women in those days. She dragged herself, and the King's ladies and gentlemen with her, through Provence, at great expense, and did not reach Modena till midsummer. "She's a scatterbrain!" remarks Madame, heaping all the faults of her granddaughters upon her detested daughter-in-law, and further upon the latter's mother, the more detested Montespan.

One cannot help wondering if, in Pöllnitz's "satisfactory audience" with Mademoiselle's prospective father-in-law, the conversation turned upon the bride. He had known her as a girl, had been in Paris during all the Richelieu scandal. But the Baron was nothing if not tactful; the audience was "satisfactory," though



he prophesied no happy future for this hare-brained young woman at Modena.

“She will need all her cleverness to make something of her life at the Court of Modena. For nothing can be quieter; one may even say that one breathes there an air which conduces to melancholy, especially when one comes from so brilliant a Court as that of France. The life here is like life in a monastery. One rises very early, one goes to mass, one dines early, one goes for a turn after dinner, in the evening one plays for a little while, one sups at eight, and by ten one is in bed. At least that was the ordinary way of life of the Court, anyhow when I was there; perhaps the arrival of the Princess may change somewhat the boring monotony of existence.”

Pöllnitz's forebodings were true. Madame writes, eighteen months after the marriage, that the Princess wandered from room to room all day long, exclaiming: “Ah! que je m'ennuis! Ah! que je m'ennuis ici!” But she was getting on better with her husband than at first.

After Modena the Baron spent three days at Parma. He notes that “connoisseurs make much of the pictures in the cathedral.” He found the nobility numerous, but “so Italian that it was difficult to get on with them.” The Court “was no gayer than that of Modena,” but Pöllnitz, with an eye to the Spanish journey he planned, did not fail to pay his respects to the Duke Francesco Farnese, who, “by a dispensation of which the Catholic Church gives few examples, had married his brother's widow,” whose daughter, by her first husband, was Elizabeth, Queen of Spain.

By Piacenza, “almost a desert, no one in the streets,” to Milan, where he spent a sociable time. The nobility lived in grand style, in fine houses, richly furnished—

“Rooms with a grand and noble air, such as the Italians do not generally pride themselves upon. People



of quality have plenty of society ; an assembly every evening at different houses, where one enjoys great liberty. Each one does what he likes ; some talk, some play ; after cards a supper together, and sometimes a ball follows . . . a very agreeable place to stay in. I omitted to mention one of the best qualities of the Milanese : they are not at all jealous. I do not know how it is that they manage to avoid one of the chief Italian characteristics.”

By Caserta the Baron moved on to the Court of Victor Amadeus, the first King of Sardinia. His wife was Madame’s step-daughter. Both their daughters, the Queen of Spain, the first wife of Philip V, and the charming Duchess of Burgundy, such a short time Dauphine, were now dead.

The Baron paid assiduous court to all the Royal Family, and was very well received by them. Especially was he struck with the Princess of Carignano, wife of the first Prince of the Blood, and a daughter of Louis XIV, who was very gracious to him, but left soon after his arrival to join her husband in Paris. The Court at Turin was not dull. *Cercle* at six or seven, in full court dress in the Queen’s apartments, then at the Queen-mother’s, Madame Royale. After that the nobility assembled at the Princess de Villafranca’s for play—many tables of ombre, lansquenet, etc.

“ I was very lucky at play, as indeed I had been during the whole of my Italian journey. I paid the expenses of that journey entirely by play, so that when I crossed the mountains I had still some two hundred pistoles in my pocket to the good.”

There were many foreigners at Turin, in the King’s service. The lieutenant-general of the army was Count Schulemburg, whom Pöllnitz had known at Dresden.

“The young men here seem less frivolous than elsewhere. I do not know if they are any wiser, but they seem to be, at least in public. Had I any advice to give the father of a family, it would be to send his sons here to the Academy; I doubt if there is a better one in Europe, as much on account of the fencing-master as for the way in which the young men are managed. They are lodged, fed, and taught in every kind of science and exercises. They are divided into two classes: one only studies law; these pay less; but all must be gentlemen. They are only allowed out once a week, on a certain day; but they may go to Court, or go anywhere, except into the gambling-houses.”

This hardly seems to fall into line with Pöllnitz's self-confessed gambling propensities; but we must remember that, at the period, a line was drawn between public gambling and card-playing in society, though the stakes at the latter were often enormous. Gambling in society was considered a pastime, and not a vice.

Daily the Baron promenaded on the Esplanade, between the city and the Citadel—

“Where there were very fine avenues, and one often met very pretty people. The air here is exceeding good, and all the fair Piedmontese are very lively and are born with much intelligence. I was very sorry to leave them, but it is a necessary evil, one needs must when the order is pressing.”

The Baron tells the story of an adventure that made much stir at the Sardinian Court. The lover of a very beautiful maid of honour was in despair at being repulsed, and threatened to kill himself. “Well, Monsieur, do so!” she exclaimed. “I don't care!”

So he determined to give her a fright. Hurrying from her presence, he bought a bladder full of blood, and secreted it under his shirt. Then he returned to plead his cause once more. Upon receiving the same reply,

he again exclaimed: "You want to kill me, Made-moiselle! Then I will satisfy you!"

And, plunging his sword through the bladder, fell as if dead.

The young lady screamed for help, terrified at the blood. But the young man, when they raised him, showed no signs that the sacrifice he had made cost him much. What was far worse for him was that Madame Royale was immediately informed, and had the young man taught a lesson of how to behave in her anteroom, by having him shut up in a castle near Turin for two years.

Paris-ward bound, the Baron approached, by way of Susa, in fear and trembling, "the terrible Mont Cenis," and prepared to cross it. The day following—

"I had my post-chaise taken to pieces, and, with my boxes, loaded on mules; then I seated myself in a sort of arm-chair, and two men, relieved from time to time by two others, carried me over in five hours. When I reached the summit of the mountain I halted, hoping to see a great stretch of country; but the only view was of a fine meadow and a large lake, and fields, which afford excellent pasturage. On the top of Mont Cenis there was also an inn, where the muleteers and porters refreshed themselves. It is the most dismal spot in the world; and is really in the midst of a frightful desert, always covered with snow for at least nine months of the year. One thing must be noted, that, in the midst of such a solitude, and surrounded by people one does not know, one never has anything stolen."

At Lansleburg the Baron's chaise was put together again, as the coach road began, and he drove to Chambéry.

"The road is buried in mountains and rocks, and one sees precipices that give one a fright. There are indeed

railings, but these are so slight that they could not stop a chaise. I saw a cart drawn by four horses fall over one of these precipices; the horses were killed, and the cart and its entire load, which consisted of china and mirrors belonging to the Princess of Carignano, broken in pieces. The driver, though the loss of his cart was not his fault, wanted to kill himself; he drew his knife and was about to stab himself, if my postillion and others had not prevented him doing so."

Chambéry, the capital of Savoy, Pöllnitz found a pleasant old town, with many nobles, who, though impecunious, kept a good table, and were sociable. The ladies were beautiful, the men well made, and the common people quiet and polite, and "on the whole, the Savoyards are nice folk. They are, indeed, accused of being too economical . . . but when, with small means, you have to keep up your position, you must do the best you can with your housekeeping."

The Baron went on to Geneva, and was very interested in the little Republic, "mistress, as it thinks itself, of its lake, as Venice of the Adriatic! . . . and existing by virtue of the jealousy of the neighbouring sovereigns," yet maintaining fortifications, arsenal, militia—all useless, he thought, if one of these rulers did really attack the city, and another did not come to its assistance. As to the houses, furniture, and stuffs, there was even a decree of the Senate which forbade the using of gold on them, "apparently in fear lest the luxury which ruined the old Roman Republic should cause a similar decadence in this little State. . . . In matters of religion the Genevese are very careful to tolerate no other sect than the Reformed Religion." As for the merchants, the Baron has not a good word to say for them, for he had a little difficulty with one who had been pointed out to him as the most important of his class, but who gave him "a poor opinion of their honesty."

When he was leaving Geneva he had some four



hundred pistoles in old, or Spanish money, which was not allowed to pass in France. He was advised to get rid of these in exchange for a bill on Lyons. With "the most honest banker in Geneva," to whom he had been sent, he stipulated that, under no circumstances whatever, should he be paid in paper money in Lyons, as notes had already much depreciated. The banker gave a verbal promise in reply to this appeal, and added that, should the Lyons banker refuse to convert the bill of exchange into hard cash, he would do so himself if Pöllnitz returned it to him.

The Baron believed his word, and started with but a little cash for the travelling expenses. On reaching Lyons the banker there refused to pay him except in notes, saying that he was in no way bound by the arrangement the other in Geneva had made. So Pöllnitz returned the bill of exchange to Geneva, as he had settled.

"It was such a long time before any reply came that I thought I was on the way to lose both notes and coin, and was, in consequence, in rather a sad predicament, as the small sum I had kept for my journey to Lyons was soon spent. But, at the end of three weeks, the Geneva banker returned his bill of exchange, denying that he had ever arranged to pay it except in currency, which was notes."

Pöllnitz had to make the best of a bad bargain, took the notes, and started for Paris by post.

## CHAPTER XVIII

“DURING the ministry of Law,” writes a contemporary, “there have been nothing but notorious and arrant cheatings, a general upheaval of the State, and the ruin of nearly all the private bonds. . . . It is a game of thimble-rig which lasted two years, in order to draw all the money of the kingdom into the royal coffers.”

The slump had come in Paris, and that in spite of the Regent’s bolstering up of Law. In eight months he had issued thirty-eight decrees arbitrarily fixing the value of the *billet d’état*. But he could not stave off the catastrophe.

Madame grew uneasy.

“The Regent gave another large sum of money, but financial difficulties are rife. The offices of the Mississippi Company are crowded with shareholders anxious to turn their paper into gold. They are suspicious of notes, though only a few weeks before they had realized enormous sums by speculations in this same paper.”

In May 1720 she writes that—

“The Regent issued a decree to restrain the panic, but which only increased it; also the feeling of insecurity, for it reduced the Mississippi shares and bank-notes to half their nominal value. The population hates Law.”

A week later—

“My son has been obliged to withdraw Law from his post. Once that man was looked upon as a god, now

his life is hardly safe, and they have been obliged to give him a company of the Guards to protect him from the fury of the mob. . . . The goldsmiths decline to work, and sell all their goods at three times their proper value because of the bank-note business. I have often wished that a big bonfire could be made of these notes, for they are a cause of great trouble to my son, and it would be impossible to explain to you all the mischief they have wrought in this country. . . . According to the universal rumours everything is going on as badly here as possible. I wish that Law and his system were with the devil, and that he had never set foot in France."

In the middle of July the Bank suspended payment after several days' run. The Regent revoked the decree, "but the people were angry with him for the edict." Her ladies came rushing in to Madame a few days later, to tell her that the mob had invaded the gardens of the Palais Royal, bringing with them the bodies of three men trampled to death in front of the Bank during the run. Law had to fly in disguise, his coach smashed up. Madame, at S. Cloud, received letters threatening to burn the Palais Royal. "My son was much beloved. Since the advent of that accursed Law he has been hated."

It was to this state of things that Pöllnitz returned in the summer. The notes went down daily. Law had scattered eight millions' worth of paper among the public; it was more than the Bank had in cash. The Regent had, indeed, paid off one billion of debts, but France was ruined.

"It was now," writes Pöllnitz, "that the term 'to realize' became the favourite catchword of the time . . . most private people tried to change their notes, not for money, which seemed to have hidden itself in the bowels of the earth, but for real articles; some bought diamonds, some silver plate, others goods; in short, the most prudent got rid of their paper. Nobles became

merchants. The Duc de la Force opened a large shop of coffee, candles, groceries, and the like, to sell again. . . . In this crisis of the reduction of notes I reached Paris. This city was then like a wood in which one only hears talk of robbers and murders. Indeed, the ease with which many people carry their fortune in their pocket-book is a great temptation to thieves. Madame writes of the "disordered life of Paris, every day more horrible and detestable. Every time it thunders I tremble for this city."

A story is told of how the depreciation of the shares obsessed every one. A doctor was called to the bedside of a sick lady. As he sat there some one remarked that the Mississippi shares had fallen still lower. Now the doctor held a great many, and was so startled that, even when feeling his patient's pulse, he kept muttering to himself: "Going down, down, down!"

The poor woman began to moan, "So I am surely dying, doctor?"

But the doctor awoke from his reverie, looked up, and said: "Your pulse is regular. I was thinking of the Mississippi shares!"

Yet, despite the lack of money, luxury, dissipation, gambling had reached their extreme height and "the young profligates went to the most frightful excess in order to seize something to satisfy them." The murder, for filthy lucre, by a young Count Horn, of very distinguished family, of a poor clerk who earned his living by jobbing shares, threw a lurid light on the depravity of Paris. The Regent refused to pardon Horn, and he and his accomplices were executed.

The appearance of the plague at Marseilles added another disaster to poor France. The Baron was at the Regent's levée when the announcement of the bad news spread consternation among the Duke's boon companions and cronies, the duc de Saint-Simon, the Cardinal de Polignac, the Marquis de Nesle, the Abbé de Grancy, his chaplain, d'Effiat, and de Conflans.



But the scare "was soon forgotten," writes the Baron, "and people gave themselves up more than ever to pleasure, good living, gallantry, and so on. Only gambling seemed to suffer a little, because ready money was necessary for it, notes having only a fictitious value. . . . As for business, if notes were refused there was no sale; so either alternative was ruinous to trade."

Pöllnitz passed the worst of this terrible time at a friend's country-house near Orleans, and suffered but vicariously from the appalling state of things. He only returned to Paris to prepare for his journey to Spain, and went by way of Lyons and Languedoc, in order to pay visits to different friends on their estates, passing from Lyons to Vienne, and then over the Rhône again by the Vivarez to a château near Nîmes, where he stayed a month, "and saw the famous arena which is the precious remains of Roman antiquity." (Is he alluding to that at Arles?)

Thence he went to Montpellier. People had just begun to discover the Sunny South, the *Côte d'Azur*. The Baron spent some time at this fashionable place, the forerunner of the Riviera health resorts, "in my opinion one of the most agreeable cities of the Kingdom, and the one in which, after Paris, there is the most *beau-monde*." He found it charmingly situated, not far from the sea, surrounded by very fertile valleys, which make pretty views; the houses ill-built, but inside very clean and well furnished. The streets were so narrow as to be difficult for carriages, and our Baron was carried about in a sedan-chair, and admired the beautiful environs, the promenades on the sea-shore, in the tree-shaded square, and on the terrace under the great equestrian statue of Louis XIV.

Of Béziers he quotes the local saying: "If God wished to choose a dwelling-place on earth, He would chose Béziers." He had heard that the aristocracy were renowned for having more mind and better manners than those anywhere else. But the Baron's experience in different Courts of people who hailed

from Béziers gave him another opinion, "for they were indeed the most frivolous in the world."

By Castelnau-dry he went to Toulouse, pleased with Languedoc, "no province in France pleasanter to travel in," fine roads, and good inns, well supplied, and very reasonable. The streets of their capital were very ill-kept, but the Toulaisians very witty, "though, unfortunately, they know it, which is a pity for them." Polite to strangers, Pöllnitz had never been better entertained at table; "they all had cheerful sallies." As with the Irish, probably,—

"The accent of the dialect, especially among the women, gives a certain charm to all they say, and makes the commonest remarks seem witty. The little songs and ballads are also racy; every one makes them, and, if these are not equally good, they are always quite as well received by reason of the knack displayed in making them appreciated."

Then on to Pau. At that day it consisted of but one long street, with the very old castle at the end, and outside the gates on that side a thick wood on a terrace, which formed a magnificent promenade with views of the Pyrenees, and of a wide valley divided by a beautiful river, and strewn with villages.

Then, by diligence, over bad roads, with detestable inns, Pöllnitz passed to the Spanish-looking old city of Bayonne.

His first care on arrival was to call upon the Commandant, a French Canadian, of the King's Normandy regiment, who had been rapidly promoted by the Regent at the beginning of the war with Spain. As he was not at Bayonne at the time, the Baron was civilly received by his deputy, one Dadoncourt, appointed by the Regent as a man he could rely upon. Pöllnitz informed him that he meditated crossing into Spain, and Dadoncourt informed him that he could do as he pleased, and that he saw no hindrance to his going. The next day he called on the Baron, and invited him to dinner.

The company did not seem well assorted, and there was conversation which displeased Pöllnitz very much. At his first meeting with Dadoncourt Pöllnitz had spoken to him of a visit he had paid to the Comte de S——, in Languedoc. During dinner Dadoncourt referred to this visit more than once, and confessed that he was much surprised that the Regent had set S—— at liberty, instead of cutting off his head as he deserved.

“ ‘Yes, indeed,’ he added, with a vehemence to which I think wine had contributed not a little, ‘His Royal Highness has been too lenient; all the swine who had dared to wallow in the affair of Prince Cellamare ought to have had their heads cut off!’ ”

“ I was much astonished at the man’s vehemence, and gently pointed out to him that the Regent had displayed a great deal of prudence in his conduct, and that it would have been too cruel to kill people of position, whose blood would, perhaps, have found an avenger.

“ ‘Well, Monsieur,’ he replied, ‘what could they have done? The Duc d’Orléans was sure of his troops, his fortresses, every one would certainly have taken his part in the provinces; I myself should have hung the first gentleman who stirred.’ ”

“ Seeing that I had to do with a redoubtable satellite, and moreover perceiving that he was in his cups, I left him free scope to exaggerate the devotion that he pretended to have for the Regent, promising myself not to see any more of a man with such sanguinary sentiments.”

After dinner Pöllnitz proceeded to an audience with the Dowager Queen of Spain, the widow of Charles II and sister of his jovial host at Heidelberg, the Elector Palatine, and of the late Empress Eleanor. During her husband’s last years she had worked zealously for the German succession to the throne of Spain, as against that of France. When she had finally been worsted,

and Louis XIV was sending his grandson Philip to take possession of the Spanish Crown, the wise old monarch, in the instructions he drew up for the young King's guidance, had specially warned him against Maria Anna and her intrigues.

"Have no dealing with the Queen-Dowager that you can avoid. Arrange that she leaves Madrid, but does not quit Spain. Whatever place she may be in, have her conduct watched, and prevent her meddling in any business. Suspect all who have any dealings with her."

When Elizabeth Farnese had come to Spain seven years before, Maria Anna went from Bayonne to Pau to meet the niece who was to sit upon the throne from which fate had driven her, a childless widow. Though poor and in exile, she had brought the bride an offering of pearls and diamonds and a magnificent carriage. Perhaps she hoped, through Elizabeth's influence, to be permitted to return to Spain. "The two Queens spent a pleasant twelve days together," Elizabeth in no hurry to meet the uxorious, jealous Philip, who was to treat her like a prisoner. Aunt and niece "hunted and danced together, they slept in the same room at uncomfortably close quarters; the old Queen would sing, while her niece played the clavecin." No doubt they discussed the political situation, and the necessity of ousting from her position of chief favourite and virtual ruler of Spain, Madame des Ursins, who had been instrumental in keeping Maria Anna in exile. The Dowager saw her niece as far as the frontier.

"Elizabeth Farnese has been criticized for not allowing her aunt to return to Spain. Leave was more than once granted, and, according to the custom, certain towns assigned as a residence. But she was never satisfied with the suggestions of others, and was one of those unhappy, middle-aged ladies whom nobody wants. Between Elizabeth, her mother and her



aunt, there is much acrimonious correspondence upon the subject, and the Duke of Parma is pathetic in his terror at her design of retiring to his capital. The widow of Charles II had not borne a good name in Spain; and she seemed ultimately to have consoled herself by marrying secretly a French commercial traveller. Yet she was a kindly, hospitable soul. . . .”

Elizabeth Farnese, having ousted, not only Madame des Ursins, but also Cardinal Alberoni, to whom she owed her crown, reigned supreme in Spain, fighting the Emperor and the French for her children's interests with the tenacity and the fury of a tigress. Maria Anna had, of course, been in the opposite camp, a close correspondent of “Madame” her kinswoman, worrying the latter “with commissions, compliments, and petitions for bishoprics and captaincies of the guards, pensions, and abbeys for her favourites. But she worked for the good understanding of my son with the King of Spain.”

For the last nine years the poor Dowager had lived at Bayonne, under the eye of the French, and not allowed either to return to Madrid or to go back to her native land. Pöllnitz found her in her palace, “which was nothing more than a rather poor house.” The equerry took him to a waiting-room, whence he was conducted to the Duchess of Liguères, the Queen's lady-in-waiting, who was very civil, but, as she could only speak Spanish, conversation was impossible. She could but make signs, and the Baron reply by many bows. Happily, each was rid of the other by Pöllnitz being ushered into the Queen's presence.

She was dressed in black, in Spanish fashion, and received the Baron standing, alone in her room, though divers maids of honour, also in mantillas, peeped through the half-open door.

The Queen was very gracious to Pöllnitz, and evidently was delighted to meet a German so well acquainted with the native land she had always loved,

and with so many of her relations. She asked for news of the Elector and of the Princes, her brothers, and Pöllnitz was able to give her plenty. After an audience which, lasting over an hour, must have been a welcome break to the poor, proud, lonely old lady, eating her heart out in monotonous semi-captivity, he was dismissed, and kneeling, kissed, according to Spanish custom, the Queen's hands.

Next day, and for several days after, Pöllnitz paid his respects to Maria Anna, sometimes when she went to mass at the Capuchins' convent, or at that of the Franciscans, where she attended Benediction every afternoon, and sometimes in a garden behind the house, where she walked after dinner. She always talked to him with "a delightful kindness and familiarity, very pleased to be quit of ceremonial as uncomfortable for her as for those admitted to her audience."

One day she asked him if he was not surprised to see her so badly lodged, and with so poor a household. He confessed he had been a little surprised that she had not chosen the old castle in the town, which looked more like a palace than the house she was in.

"But," she replied, "I have got used to my little home, and I cannot make up my mind to leave it. I retired here during the troubles between the House of Austria and France, in order not to be obliged to see so many people, which I must have done had I inhabited the castle. Every one coming to France, or to Spain would, no doubt, have asked to see me; all these visits would infallibly have given umbrage to one of the two Parties, and perhaps to both, and I had good reasons to keep on good terms with them."

On another occasion Pöllnitz spoke of Spain and Germany, and took the liberty to inquire why the Queen had chosen to stay at Bayonne rather than in either of these countries, where she would have had more power, and have been attended by a larger number of people of position.

“As for people of position,” replied the Queen, “I do not care much about them. For royalty all men are equal; they are only great the nearer they are to us, and in proportion as we honour them with our trust. A man you call a nobody, if I give him to-morrow an appointment and admit him to my service, is, in my eyes, as great a lord as if his forefathers had held the same employment all their lives. As for living in Spain or Germany, I have strong reasons against it. In Spain, I should be obliged to go into a convent, which I should much dislike. In Germany, I should, indeed, be among my own family, but the Court of Spain would, perhaps, dislike my being there, and would make trouble about my jointure, which I am very glad to keep.”

Pöllnitz thought that, beside these reasons, her long stay at Bayonne had made her like the place, and that this sort of solitude pleased her better than a large Court, “where Princes and courtiers often bore each other mutually.”

The air of freedom about this little Court, and the kindness of the Queen in conversing with him so often, induced Pöllnitz, to his undoing, to defer his departure for Spain from day to day. However, at last he seriously made up his mind to start. All was ready, he had but to take leave of the Queen, when an incident occurred which made him hate his stay at Bayonne as much as he had hitherto enjoyed it. Some jokes he had imprudently made drew down upon him the wrath of the Commandant, who took advantage of a specious pretext to avenge himself.

The Queen was under the thumb of a woman named Laborde, “of somewhat free manners,” the widow of a shopkeeper, but who had since secretly married the Queen’s major-domo. This woman had wormed herself into the favour of Maria Anna, who saw her daily. She allowed her to be seated in her presence, which so turned her head that she quite forgot her origin, and,

putting on the airs of a princess, was hated not only by the Court, but also by all Bayonne. The Commandant was the only person friendly to her, and he only because, having arrived at Bayonne in rather low water, he had been obliged to have recourse to the assistance of the kind and generous Queen, which he succeeded in doing through Laborde.

Now the odd figure of the Commandant, and the peculiar style of dress affected by Laborde, furnished an inexhaustible fund of amusement to the little Court, sorely in need of enlivening. It was, of course, impossible that a humorist like Pöllnitz, who had a real talent for seeing the funny side of things, should not add his quota to fun.

“It was impossible to keep from laughing at the sight, on one hand, of the frizzled old head of the Commandant—commonly dubbed ‘The Eternal Father,’ and, on the other, of this Dame Laborde, usually attired in three or four different-coloured dressing-gowns, one on top of the other, one shorter than the other; her favourite headdress soiled mob-caps, poppy red; further, she wore at her side a huge bouquet of flowers, fastened by a flame-coloured ribbon; and, on the other, the portrait of some saint or other, also fastened by a flame-coloured bow. A little lackey, as funny as his mistress, held up the tails of all these dresses.”

At a supper-party the Baron was unwise enough to make some rather witty jokes over this charming couple. The Commandant was told of it, and Pöllnitz was warned by a German Franciscan, the Queen’s confessor, that he intended to arrest him.

As Pöllnitz felt quite innocent of any crime, he thought the warning was only intended to frighten him. However, he went to Dadoncourt, and told him about it. The latter took God to witness that there was no such plan afoot, and that Pöllnitz could leave whenever he liked. He had, however, no sooner returned to his



inn than the provost-marshal of the fortress entered, with two soldiers with bayonets on their muskets, and told the Baron that he arrested him in the King's Name, and that he was ordered to take him and his valet to the citadel. He demanded the keys of Pöllnitz's trunks, all his papers, and put his baggage in charge of the landlord.

## CHAPTER XIX

ON being taken to the citadel, Pöllnitz was locked into one room and his valet into another. When supper was brought him in the evening he asked for paper and ink to write to the Commandant to inquire the reason of his arrest. Also he asked for leave to write to France to the Regent, and to his friends.

The Commandant replied next day that Pöllnitz's statements to him, in the presence of witnesses, about his friendship with the Comte de S—— showed him that Pöllnitz might quite possibly have been implicated in Cellamare's conspiracy. He, therefore, considered it his duty to detain him, pending a reply to a letter that he had written to the Court, and ended his letter with assurances of friendship and protestations of desire to serve him.

Under these circumstances there was nothing to be done but to await developments. The Baron stayed in bed as much as possible for the next few days, and whiled away the time in sleep, for when he was awake he racked his restless brain with useless schemes for extricating himself from this predicament.

After a few days an officer, with a sergeant and four men with fixed bayonets, entered his room. He bade Pöllnitz follow him to the Major of the citadel, who was ordered to interrogate him. The Baron deemed it wisest to be very docile. The Major, who was seated in a chair, was very civil, apologizing for not rising, as he was ill with the gout and could not move. He asked Pöllnitz all sorts of questions about himself, to which he received very laconic replies. Then the prisoner was taken back to his room.

Two days later his valet was set at liberty and allowed to wait upon him, and a German Capuchin, Father Thomas, was ordered to visit him. These favours raised poor Pöllnitz's hopes, and "every time I heard the key turned I thought my captivity had come to an end," and that orders had come from the Duc d'Orléans to set him free.

But it was quite the contrary. Dadoncourt wrote him a note to say that he had been ordered to keep him in yet stricter confinement. This he did, and even, in Pöllnitz's opinion, overdid. The valet was removed; Father Thomas came no more, and "it was not the Duke's fault that I did not die of hunger and cold." His provisions were reduced by half, his fuel entirely cut off, lest he should burn down the citadel. In reply to a letter of remonstrance on the subject, the Commandant only said that a Prussian should not feel the cold in Guienne, "adding impertinently that, if I was really cold, he advised me to stay in bed."

Nor was this all. Dadoncourt forbade the Bank to cash the few notes which Pöllnitz had left him, fearing apparently lest, having ready money, he should attempt to bribe his guards. Further, he so abused his authority as to have Pöllnitz's baggage, which had been left at the inn, sold to pay his bill there. He would not allow him to send any one to attend the sale on his behalf, and the things were bought by Dadoncourt's valet at an eighth part of their value.

Very enraged by this treatment, the irate Baron wrote several letters, to the Duc d'Orléans, to M. Le Blanc, Minister of War, and sent them to the post at Acqs, by a soldier whom he bribed with money through a chink in the door. All this produced no result. It was the same with a letter to the Queen of Spain, "who looked upon me as a state prisoner, and would not take an interest in me." This last failure put poor Pöllnitz into such a state of despair and melancholy that he fell ill, "and they were cruel enough to refuse me a doctor."

At this time the Baron de Montbel chanced to pass through Bayonne on his way to Spain. French by birth, he had taken refuge at the Prussian Court upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and had been a captain in the regiment of guards commanded by Pöllnitz's father. Hearing that the son was shut up in the Citadel "he asked permission to visit me." Dadoncourt refused point-blank. Montbel asked that, at least, he might send his compliments by Pöllnitz's valet. This was allowed, but only to add another insult. On entering the citadel the valet was searched from head to foot to see if he were carrying any letter from the Baron. As he denied that he had any letter on him, he was clapped into the cells and told that he should stay there for the rest of his life unless he confessed to have given letters to his master.

Pöllnitz was really in a very sad plight: arrested under false pretences, suffering cold and hunger, and deprived of all help from a Princess from whom he had hoped so much. Under such a persecution he fell into a state of melancholy from which he roused into such paroxysms of anger that he thought he should go off his head. Happily he ended "by arguing that, to die of grief was the greatest folly I could commit," and philosophically making up his mind "to pass his time tranquilly in the citadel till the majority of Louis XV."

Just as he had become accustomed to the solitude and silence—for a man of his temperament the hardest things he had to bear—on January 31st Dadoncourt's valet came to inform him that he was free. He said that his master had orders to send him out of the citadel, but that, as it was late, he begged him to spend the night there, and on the morrow to go where he chose. Pöllnitz agreed, but next morning Dadoncourt went back on what he had said, sending to ask when Pöllnitz was going to Spain, as he had orders not to let him stay in Bayonne.

Pöllnitz sent back word to say that he could not leave without discounting his bank-notes, the only



money he had, and adding that, if he were not to be allowed to cash them himself, he asked at least to be allowed to go to Holland, where he would find friends and relations to help him.

Dadoncourt replied haughtily that he was neither a banker nor money-changer, that Pöllnitz could not remain in the citadel, as his (Dadoncourt's) orders were that he was to leave it; and, finally, that he could not let him go to Holland, as his orders were to send him across to Spain. The impertinent, familiar style of this reply further enraged the Baron, who saw himself obliged to start for Spain with only a ragged staff in his hand.

Happily, Father Thomas came to the rescue and provided forty pistoles for two thousand louis in bank-notes. His baggage did not cause Pöllnitz much trouble; Dadoncourt, as we have shown, had seen to that. As the journey to Spain was considered a matter of the greatest urgency, Pöllnitz was given a guard to the frontier. There he was shown the orders from the Court, a letter addressed to Dadoncourt by Le Blanc, Minister of War.

“His Royal Highness is quite willing, Monsieur, to grant his liberty to the *Sieur* Baron de Pöllnitz, now detained in the Citadel of Bayonne, on condition that he leaves the kingdom, and that is why I beg you to have him escorted to the frontier of Spain.”

Unless, as Pöllnitz himself suggests, the whole affair was the result of the frizzle-headed old Commandant's personal spite, it is inexplicable. For Pöllnitz had left Paris only a few months before on the best terms with the Regent, having been present at his *levées*. Moreover, the intelligence between France and Spain was daily growing better, and the former was unlikely to stir up the dead embers of the Cellamare plot.

Pöllnitz crossed the mountains to Pampeluna, finding “the passes of the Pyrenees very different to those of the Alps.” But everywhere he found—

“Detestable inns, which looked like robbers’ caves. The inhabitants of these mountains have a something about their faces which alarms the traveller. I found myself obliged to spend the night with my valet in a drinking-shop with about a score of these folk; we made up our minds not to go to sleep, and I think we were wise, for these mountaineers looked like real cut-throats. I left this humble halting-place as early as I could, reaching Pampeluna by evening. I alighted at the inn pointed out to me as the best in the town, but which I found as bad as those I had come across on my way from Bayonne. The bread, the wine, the meat, the bed, was all horrible. But, as life seemed to me more secure than in the mountain taverns, I made up for the night that I had sat up by sleeping the sleep of the just till the morrow.”

Pöllnitz called upon the Viceroy of Navarre, the Prince of Castellane, and explained his plight to him. The Prince was very civil and sympathetic, and offered Pöllnitz anything he required. As to the latter’s treatment at the hands of the Commandant he was not surprised. Pöllnitz was not the only one who had suffered, and the Prince said that he did not understand how the Regent could allow the injustice which was perpetrated in Bayonne to go on. He suggested to Pöllnitz to write an exact account of what he had gone through. “Even if it does not bring you any reparation, I am sure it will bring down a lecture upon the Commandant.”

Pöllnitz followed the Viceroy’s advice, but—

“I had been painted in such black colours to the Regent and the Minister that, not content with leaving my letters unanswered, they wrote to M. de M——, the French *chargé d’affaires* at Madrid, to do all he could against me. The latter faithfully carried out his orders, not only from obedience to his Prince, but also on account of the pleasure it gave him to do harm.”

The Viceroy showed the sights of Pampeluna to Pöllnitz, and they walked outside the town, "which is in a very fine position," and recently more strongly fortified by Cardinal Alberoni. Then Pöllnitz went on his way to Madrid, "along an unpleasant road, through an arid land, with here and there dilapidated villages, and, what was worse, inns where one could hardly find enough to live upon."

On entering Castille it was worse. The rooms were poorly furnished, one was obliged to provide one's own food, and to prepare it. However, it was cheap enough, and Pöllnitz went through the country without meeting with any misadventure, which was not a little surprising, as murders and robberies were very common in Spain.

The entrance to Madrid struck him as having a fictitious resemblance to that of Rome by the Porta del Popolo. But the resemblance did not last long. Three bifurcating streets led to the heart of the city, and Pöllnitz took one which led him to the Plaza di S. Domingo, where he had been told of a French inn.

As he was getting out of his post-chaise he found himself warmly embraced by a man he had known in the service of King Stanislaus of Poland, and later at Paris. He had been obliged to fly thence from the hands of justice, having been accused of the robbery and murder of an Abbé, and in his absence he had been executed in effigy. Having found his way to Madrid, then the Alsatia for Frenchmen, he had changed his name from Le G—— to that of the Baron D——.

Pöllnitz instantly recognized him when he approached to greet him, but, remembering the affair in Paris, did not respond, and feigned not to know him.

"What! are you not the Baron de Pöllnitz? Don't you remember seeing me in Berlin, and also at Hanover," etc., the man continued, and recalled the past, and his stay in Paris.

Pöllnitz remained on the defensive, but gradually, weary of his reminiscences, he let the man see that he

recollected him faintly, called him by the name of several people whom they had met, and, finally, "after much apparent groping, I decided to give him pleasure, and exclaimed hesitatingly: 'But, Monsieur, might you be M. le G——?' "

"At this the man changed countenance, coloured, and withdrew without a reply, and I proceeded to look for a room. When I came down in the evening to supper at the *table d'hôte*, I found some officers there who had seen M. le G—— speaking to me. They inquired who he was, and I, unaware that he had changed his name, made no bones about saying that he was Le G——. No sooner had I mentioned the name than one of the company exclaimed: 'Eh! *Morbleu!* It's Abbé V——'s murderer! What! a man like that asking for an apartment here!'

"I then saw that I had made a mistake in mentioning Le G——'s name, but, at the same time, I thought that Le G—— had made a worse by placing me under the necessity of doing so. I tried to explain away what I had said, but no one would listen. Every one was enlarging on the story of the pretended Baron's flight from France, and, in the end, it was spread about that he left Madrid, and went, it is said, to Portugal, where he did well."

The Baron had not long been at Madrid ere he found old acquaintance. The day after his arrival no less than twenty officers, French and German, whom he had known at different Courts, came to call upon him. The discovery of Cellamare's plot had driven many Frenchmen across the frontier, besides others who had been implicated in the abortive risings in Brittany, and who were ruined.

"These were received in Spain as men who had sacrificed everything for King Philip. Cardinal Alberoni had made them all colonels, without even



knowing if they had ever served. Others, who had abandoned larger estates, were so unfortunate as to be the least rewarded."

At his hostel Pöllnitz found the Baron de Montbel, who had taken so many steps, though in vain, to inquire after his health when he was incarcerated in the citadel of Bayonne. In fact Pöllnitz soon found "even more acquaintances than I wished for, as I had not come here to amuse myself, but to seek employment." His first care was to be presented to the King and Queen. His audience with the former was secret. "The public audiences are for people of small account, and are held in the presence of the grandees, the King merely replying to the petitions presented to him by a 'I will see. I'll attend to it.'"

Then the private secretary, who is the introducer, announced a private audience; the grandees retired, and the doors of the hall were closed. Pöllnitz found the King alone in his room. Philip was now middle-aged and had grown very stout and indolent. The Baron made him three genuflexions, and, as he approached the King, knelt down. He told His Most Christian Majesty that, having heard of his great piety and zeal for the Catholic Faith, he thought he could do no better than to throw himself at his feet and offer his humble services; he mentioned how he had incurred his sovereign's displeasure, and lost all hope of serving with comfort in his own land, because of the New Religion which he had embraced. He laid before Philip the attestation signed by Cardinal Noailles, and also the letter of the King of Prussia, appointing him gentleman of the chamber, which appointment would, doubtless, but for his change of religion, have been confirmed. The King looked at both, and then gave them back to him, saying: "I will attend to what you ask, and I will send to you soon." Pöllnitz then presented a memorial he had in his pocket, rose, and left the room backwards, with three genuflexions.

Now that she had driven away Alberoni, the stepping-stone by which she had reached her present high position, it was Elizabeth Farnese—the *homme-femme*, de Noailles called her—who ruled Spain, and who was the fountain of favours. Philip had been but as wax in her hands from the first moment he set eyes upon his graceful young bride, brimming over with life and spirits, the exact opposite of himself. Though Alberoni's far-flung schemes for the aggrandisement of Spain had failed, because too impracticable, Spain was reaping the fruit of his wiser internal administration. She was at peace again, in a better condition than her neighbours, and her alliance was courted. Elizabeth, "*véritablement une femme furieuse*," said d'Argenson, was scheming to establish her sons in what had been the Spanish possessions in Italy, and in her own duchy of Parma, when the male line should die out; she was now beginning to feel hopeful of success. Pöllnitz knew that he must plead his cause with Elizabeth.

He was introduced by the major-domo. He found the Queen, tall and thin, innocent of rouge, dressed ready to go hunting with the King. Her riding habit set off her fine figure, and she was a good sports-woman, a good shot, bringing down game, large and small, from her saddle. In a uniform of blue and silver she had ridden campaigning with the King during the war in Navarre.

A few ladies were present at the interview, and through an open door Pöllnitz caught sight of the Prince of the Asturias and the other royal children. The marriage of Philip and Elizabeth was a model one; their Court set an example to all others in Europe, and maternal instinct was very strong in "the termagant of Spain."

To the Queen Pöllnitz repeated the same words that he had used to the King, "and she replied kindly that it would always be a pleasure to do anything for me that lay in her power." But it is doubtful if, despite the Palatine influence (her mother was a Neuburg) which,

doubtless, the Baron brought to bear, that he was the kind of man to appeal particularly to this masculine, straightforward, rather bluff and very outspoken lady, who hated every kind of affectation, her only weakness being that of taking snuff.

However, Pöllnitz thought that he had started well at the Spanish Court. But the next thing was to find some hard cash ; for, as we know, he had but little with him, and nothing on which he could raise any money, and, if he was to go much into society, he would soon come to an end of his supplies. But the favourable welcome of the King and Queen raised his hopes ; he found old friends, made new ones, had luck at cards—which he thought a good omen—all of which enabled him to make his appearance with a certain air of prosperity. The Ministers he found most civil ; they were few of them Spaniards, for Spain did not seem able to produce men of talent in administration, and the courtiers held aloof from politics ; the government really centred in Philip, which is to say, in Elizabeth. The Marquis Grimaldo, of Genoese extraction, an old favourite of the King's, and Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was busy on the French double marriages. He was reputed an honest man, and one to be believed if he declared that the King was interested in any one, as indeed, he did declare to Pöllnitz. Castelar, just made Minister of War, Pöllnitz thought the mostpolite minister he had ever met ; “ what was more, one who did not delay in giving favours or refusals, and did both pleasantly.”

Old Father Daubenton, the King's confessor, shared with the Queen the ascendancy over Philip, and was, in all but name, Prime Minister in Spain. He was for the Italian party, as Grimaldo was for the French. Pöllnitz applied to Daubenton, as to every one else, only to find him haughty and very brusque where his own interests were not concerned ; and he was angling for the Roman Scarlet. “ But he knew so well how to dissimulate that politeness, sometimes humility, was depicted in his

face ; one could not imagine any one more sincere." Both the Regent and Alberoni had lured him with the coveted hat, but the longed-for prize never came within his grasp.

Pöllnitz also waited on Cardinal Borgia, much in royal favour. The butt of the Court, he was utterly unsuited for his high ecclesiastical position ; he could hardly read. Pöllnitz found him too indolent to be of any use. "I do not think there is any man who possesses this characteristic to such an eminent degree." He was very devout, but quite uneducated ; Pöllnitz was told that he did not know a word of Latin.

Our Baron left no stone unturned, and was indefatigable in besieging all and every one of influence with his petitions. Then he began to see a gleam of sunlight. Either his "numerous friends had indeed spoken for him, or the King had been touched by what he had suffered for his faith." Philip gave him a commission as lieutenant-colonel *à la suite* of the Sicilian regiment, with a *soldo vivo* of about sixteen pistoles a month. The *soldo vivo* was a concession, the result of recent reforms. Not long before the Spanish army was only paid when it fought ! The *soldo vivo* meant that, in peace, the pay was the same as on active service. To Pöllnitz it seemed very good pay indeed. He found out that an officer could live in his garrison upon it, and he began to make plans of economizing, having learnt wisdom by sad experience. With what came from home, and with what he was to draw from Spain, he thought he could do up his dilapidated carriage a little, and appear in a more suitable manner, till better times dawned.

He went to offer his thanks to Their Majesties, speaking in German. Then he set off for Aragon, where his regiment was quartered. But he soon had to return, to ask for a little present, till his pay came in, for he had only reached Spain, as we know, with very little ready money. Some of his friends advised him to ask boldly for a good sum down, or a salary on some monopoly, because he could not depend upon his pay in



order to live, "for in Spain," he says, "more than anywhere else, this is often a year, and sometimes two or three, in arrears, unless one bothers some Minister, or greases the Treasurer's palm."

This prospect somewhat alarmed Pöllnitz. He saw that, perhaps, his luck might be as bad in Spain as elsewhere. But he plucked up his courage and went to the Minister of War, who sent him to Father Daubenton. The latter told him that it was no affair of his. Pöllnitz knocked at every door; they were shut in his face, or opened without any good result. So he decided to appeal direct to the King, and presented a petition explaining his plight, caused by the fall in bank-notes, and by the strange conduct of the Commandant at Bayonne.

He went to Aranjuez, the favourite residence of Philip and Elizabeth, and where the Court then was. It was also Pöllnitz's favourite resort during his stay in Spain; he enjoyed the beautiful gardens and the avenues of Charles V on the borders of the Tagus.

The King's only reply was his habitual "I will attend to it." Grimaldo was the only Minister present, and to him Pöllnitz applied later for news of the result of his *placet*. After much humming and hawing, and many delays, the Marquis sent him back to the Father Confessor. Pöllnitz's humble request to the latter was ill received. Daubenton had other matters to attend to than the Baron's *placet*, and told him so bluntly. Pöllnitz remarked that Grimaldo had sent him to him. "Oh! Grimaldo!" he interrupted, and, going into his study, shut the door in Pöllnitz's face. The two favourites hated each other.

Pöllnitz thought best to await a more favourable opportunity.

"Next day I placed myself in the posture of a suppliant in the corner of his hall. His Jesuit companion, seeing me, begged me to step into the anteroom. This I forbore to do, saying it was too much honour. The



ROYAL PALACE, MADRID.  
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.



truth was that I wished to be sure of getting speech of the confessor, for I noticed that the Reverend Father often played a school-boy trick on those waiting in the anteroom : he would pass out by a little door which opened actually into the hall in which I stood.

"I waited a good hour, and then I thought I saw my man come out by the bolt-hole. I seized him as he passed, and found him in a better frame of mind. I was told to call to-morrow to hear the King's reply. I did not fail to appear, but only to be told that it had been impossible for him to speak to the King about it, but he would do so next day, without fail.

"These days passed insensibly into weeks, and weeks into months ; I grew despairing. No one could accuse me of not petitioning. Not a morning did I miss taking a turn in the confessor's anteroom. He saw me well enough, and sometimes honoured me with a slight nod, at others only swept me a proud glance. Finally, after all this assiduity, I only obtained a formal refusal."

While thus wasting his time in Father Daubenton's ante-chamber, the Baron had ample opportunity for seeing all that was to be seen in Madrid in the way of sights, as well as of observing the way of life at the palaces at Madrid and at Retiro, which were so neglected that the rats had eaten some of the finest tapestries. He makes in his Memoirs no mention of the famous Velasquezs or Murillos, but notes that some of the best pictures had been cut in quarters to get them into one of the halls of the palace. The gardens were poor.

The King and Queen rose late, and took their chocolate. Their Secretary Grimaldo came, and they transacted business. After that the *levée*. Then Father Daubenton, staying often a good hour with the King. Audiences and Councils followed, and then dinner, quite in private with the Queen. After that the royal pair went out shooting, and returned late. A cold collation of part-ridges, or something of the kind, was served, at which Grimaldo was permitted to be present.



Then audiences in the study to foreign Ministers and other persons of distinction. The King usually stood, without his hat; the Queen did not retire. Elizabeth was far too clever to leave her husband unguided, even for a moment. She hid behind a screen, whence she could hear all that passed. Afterwards the King worked a little with his Ministers, and then spent the rest of the evening with his children and the ladies of the palace. Sometimes there were cards till supper, to which Scotti, the fat, jolly Minister of Parma, much in favour now, was generally invited, to converse with Their Majesties, who went to bed directly afterwards.

“In the country the amusements were not much livelier than at Madrid. I have seen the Court several times at Aranjuez; I noticed that the afternoons were spent in shooting, or in a promenade in the gardens of the château. During these walks Their Majesties shot at rooks with little arquebuses, which carried extraordinarily far. The Queen generally shot better than the King. While Their Majesties shot on one side, the Prince of the Asturias and his brother, the Infant Carlos, and their tutors, shot on the other, and only came home in the evening.”

The snub that Pöllnitz had received from Daubenton staggered him. He found himself without money, without credit, and without knowing how to borrow enough to carry him on till his quarter's pay was due. Luckily for him, he made the acquaintance of Colonel William Stanhope, who had been for some years British Minister at Madrid. He was high in favour with Philip, “who loved him personally, and was wont to say that he was the only Minister who never told him a falsehood.”

Pöllnitz became acquainted with Stanhope through his secretary, a German from Berlin, whose brother was *valet de chambre* to the King of Prussia. Anxious to show his gratitude for some services which my relatives had done this brother, he effected the introduction.

Stanhope the Baron found most polite, "one of the most honest and wisest men in the world ; gentle, modest and liberal, very upright. At first sight he appears cold, but he improves upon acquaintance." He took steps for Pöllnitz even with the confessor and with Scotti, all-powerful with the Queen ; but he had no success.

"However, he did all in his power : he pressed me to accept his table, he offered me his carriages, he advanced me some money ; in short, he treated me as a good friend might have done, and I may say that I am very specially indebted to him, as, without his help, I should have spent the rest of my days in Spain."

Pöllnitz passed Holy Week and Easter at Madrid, and watched the famous procession from the palace of the Retiro, where it passed before the Royal Family.

"Quite frankly I may say that I have never seen anything more contemptible, not to say scandalous, than these processions. It seemed as if the intention was to turn into ridicule the most sacred thing in the world. The Passion and Death of Our Lord were represented in such a burlesque manner that I really wonder that the Tribunal of the Inquisition, which often condemns people to the flames for imaginary crimes, does not punish very severely those who take part in these Festivals. . . . I speak of these Ceremonies as I saw them myself. I had had them very truthfully described to me, but I took it all for a libel, invented on purpose to defame the worship which the Church of Rome offers to the Greatest of our Mysteries, especially as it was Protestants who described them to me. I wished to see for myself if all that I had been told was observed in the Ceremonial of the Church in Spain. Therefore I followed the Processions with much eagerness, and I was really scandalized to see in reality what I had imagined were the fabrications of the enemies of the

Roman Church. . . . I do not know if my animosity against these superstitions was not increased by the unpleasantness of walking about the streets of Madrid . . . filthy beyond what one sees in towns with even the fewest police. A quantity of all sorts of garbage are flung out of the houses, which decays, it is said, during the night, as the air of Madrid is so corrosive. . . . But I experienced the contrary, and felt extremely upset by the stench which the filth disseminates. The diurnal smell is, however, nothing to that which one has to endure on Feast-days ; for usually the streets are then swept, and everything in them is stirred up, and it is difficult to put up with it, especially if the weather should be dry. For everything is decayed and changed into a fine dust ; the air one breathes, and even everything one eats, is infected by this dust, which penetrates everywhere. I heard an Italian Doctor say, on this subject, that a foreigner, however isolated he might live, could not pass three or four years without being attacked by an illness which we look upon with horror, but which the Spaniards do not think much of, as they maintain that it is hereditary in their families. This Doctor maintained that all one breathed, and all one ate, was poisoned by the filth of Madrid."

Yet Pöllnitz found that large sums were spent in cleaning the streets. Probably the inherent Spanish laziness was the cause of their condition.

"I know of no nation upon earth which is so fond of doing nothing. I am sure that if they inhabited a less fertile country than their own they would die of hunger. In winter they spend their time in walking in the sun, which is a delight to them. The summer days they pass asleep or in drinking iced waters, and keep their promenades for night-time. . . . The peasants in Spain are as lazy as the townsfolk . . . satisfied to scratch the soil. The Spanish indolence forbids any kind of exercise in the least active. . . . So they are

devoted to the theatre, the most amusing thing to be found in Madrid. . . . The theatre a horrible place . . . so dark, rows of benches like an amphitheatre, above, barred boxes for ladies . . . the stage like a Roman stage, a row of porticoes closed by curtains through which the players go in. All very ill-lighted, and, what shocked me most—and I smelt it at once, though I could not see it at first in the dark—a drain ran down the middle of the *parterre* causing an unbearable stench. The actors badly dressed, ugly, bad figures, the plays no better than the performers . . . mostly sacred pieces, even the Mysteries of our Religion are performed. One of my friends assured me that he had seen the Holy Sacrament administered to a sick person. If this be true I wonder that the Inquisition, usually so severe, can tolerate such abuses.”

Strange to say, the Baron, in describing his Madrid sojourn, does not refer to the women of Spain. With his keen eye for the fair sex, both as to their persons and their minds, it appears an omission rather unique in his descriptions of foreign Courts. But it is not surprising. The Spanish women of the upper classes at that period were so uneducated, stupid, and dull that Elizabeth Farnese found it impossible to endure their society. Conversation with them was impossible ; they were monosyllabic, and she turned to that of men.

A few days after his arrival Pöllnitz saw something of the horrors of the Holy Inquisition. Several people, accused of being Jews, were burnt at the stake, among them a girl of eighteen or twenty, “one of the most beautiful I had seen in Spain. She went to the stake with joy shining in her face, and died with courage such as is attributed to our martyrs.”

Shortly after that there was a great Jew hunt throughout Spain. In one night forty people were arrested in Madrid. Among them was a famous doctor named Paralta, whom Pöllnitz knew a little, a very well-bred



man ; but a bigoted Jew. His mother was in prison at his birth, and perished soon after in the flames, praying that her son might die in like manner. Paralta was brought up a Roman Catholic, but at thirty was accused and convicted of Judaism. He escaped the first time with three years' imprisonment, but the second time his mother's wishes were realized. Pöllnitz was glad to have left Madrid before his execution.

At Aranjuez he took his leave of the King. He feared up to the last that the King might not give him leave to go, lest he should change his religion. However, two words from Daubenton quieted his scruples : " It is the only obligation I had to the Reverend Father."

" The King, however, ordered me to return as soon as I could. I promised, and indeed I intended to do so, but Fortune, always contrary to my plans, made me take a very different road."

Stanhope, who had been generous to him, again gave the Baron timely help, and lent him forty pistoles for his journey, and he left Madrid with a young Baron di V——, who was going to his uncle at Bilbao. V—— was an impulsive young fire-eater, always on the lookout for insults.

The first day, in the middle of a thick wood, they perceived four well-armed men, two on either side of the road, and, as it was necessary to pass between them, Pöllnitz warned his companion to look to his pistols.

" Seeing us make a stout show, they let us pass. We thought that they were French, which induced the Baron di V—— to stop the chaise and ask them who they were. They replied that they were French officers, who had fled from their country over a duel. They asked for news from Madrid, and, as they talked, I noticed that they gradually drew closer to our chaise. Therefore I interrupted the conversation and ordered the postillion to move on, and at a good pace, because

we were in a hurry. The pretended officers broke into a trot, in order to rejoin us, but, happily for us, on reaching the top of a little hill, we saw a convoy of forty mules with several horsemen, coming towards us. No sooner had our escort caught sight of them than they turned back with a promptitude which confirmed us in my idea that they were robbers. There was no longer any room for doubt, when, later on, we met several police-patrols who were beating the country-side to catch four men, whom we easily recognized from their description as those with whom we might have had to deal."

"The second day I thought that we should fall out between ourselves on the subject of payment. As it was I who saw to the cooking, and as never in my life have I wished to die of hunger, the Baron thought me not sufficiently economical, and, at first, refused to pay his scot. In the end he yielded, but this expense went so to his heart that he looked askance at me all the rest of the journey. He even made believe not to talk to me at all. As for me, when I saw him in that mood, I also decided on silence, and, not having anything better to do, slept peacefully. My travelling companion did not begin to speak again till we reached Burgos, where Pöllnitz noted that 'the cathedral was a fine building, but entirely in the Gothic style,' which was not to the taste of the eighteenth century."

From Burgos onward through Navarre he "seemed to have entered a new world . . . the country fine and well cultivated, the villages more populated . . . a certain amount of activity among the peasants which is not found among the Spaniards."

Vittoria stands in a very fertile plain, the streets very narrow—

"The houses all of wood, and so projecting that you can shake hands from one to the other. We put up at the Posthouse, where we fared better than in any

other place in Spain. But, when it was a case of paying, there was yet another scene to get through. As for me, I paid my share without a murmur, because I have always noticed that, however one sets to work, it is always the same in the end. So, having given what they told me I owed, I busied myself in my room seeing that I had forgotten nothing, when, suddenly, I heard a great noise in the courtyard, and was obliged to put my head out of window. I was very surprised to see my Baron in conflict with the landlady and three or four of her maidservants, who were giving him a good hiding; I ran down as quickly as I could to rescue him from the hands of these Bacchantes, and arrived very *à propos*.

“For the landlady had seized a great kitchen-knife, with which she was going to stab him. I separated the combatants, and, with a little money, the hostess calmed down. The origin of the quarrel was that the Baron quite declined to pay what was asked of him, and was ready to leave without paying at all. The landlady, who would not stand any nonsense, had seized his collar, and he, to get free of her, had boxed her ears. The landlady demanded satisfaction for the affront she had received, and at last, after a great deal of noise, let us start.

“We left the post-chaise at Vittoria to take to horseback, on account of the bad roads which led to Bilbao. . . . The country is very wooded, nothing but mountains to be seen on all sides, and forests, which harbour many robbers. We dismounted at a lonely tavern in the middle of a wood, and soon found ourselves surrounded by seven or eight armed men, who really looked like cut-throats. They asked us if we were officers, and if we were alone. I had the presence of mind to reply that we were ahead of a troop of cavalry which would reach this inn shortly; consequently I ordered hay to be got ready for their horses. I do not know if this news frightened them, but they promptly left the tavern and disappeared into the wood. We

mounted our horses and set off on our road. About a league from the inn we found the highest mountains I had ever yet beheld ; they were so steep that the paths had to be cut in zigzags, and wide enough for two mules to pass."

At the foot of this pass they descended into a pretty, populated valley, " full of forges, where the best iron in Spain is hammered," and which led them to Bilbao.

Here Pöllnitz was detained longer than he had intended, seeking a vessel to take him to Holland. Bilbao was a very busy place, exporting quantities of wool to Holland, England, and France. But Philip V had taken away its privileges as a free port by establishing customs, which so irritated the inhabitants that riots ensued. These the King suppressed, " hanging a few of the ringleaders, despite the ancient privilege by which a Biscayan cannot suffer capital punishment except for high treason or heresy—a privilege of which, by the by, Philip also stripped Catalonia when he reconquered it."

To pass the time, the Baron ascended a high mountain near Bilbao to visit a miracle-working image in a chapel. He was struck by the altarpiece, a splendid wood carving, the work, he was told, of an artist who had subsequently been burnt as a Jew. " In truth the Inquisition might have pardoned him on account of his art ! "



## CHAPTER XX

FAILING to find any ship sailing for Holland, Pöllnitz, probably not altogether unwillingly, took one bound for London. For the acquaintance with Stanhope, and the kindness he had received at the ambassador's hand, must have influenced him favourably with regard to England and the English. Moreover, there occurred a chance, to Pöllnitz irresistible, of gathering fresh impressions of an unknown country.

After a six days' voyage he found himself in the Channel. He was much struck by the beauty of the scene, and the crowd of fine vessels going and coming. And, indeed, in those days, the Straits of Dover, filled with billowing masses of white sail, must have been a sight the loss of which we can but regret.

Nothing finer had the Baron seen than the estuary and the banks of the Thames "which gave a great idea of all the riches of England." Into other European capitals he had driven through suburbs, and gateways. The approaches had only prepared him for the cities themselves. But here, Pöllnitz felt, it was not only London, but England itself, which he had reached. "Everywhere fine houses and beautiful gardens; the great Arsenal, and foundry of cannon-bombs and bullets; the King's great yacht at anchor, all gilded and carved," ready to convey him across to Holland for his beloved Hanover. "The splendid Greenwich Hospital, equal to many royal palaces, not yet finished." Then, on both sides, the river fringed with a crowd of shipping at anchor on its broad bosom—brigs, frigates, barques, going up and down with the tide, "a splendid sight. I cannot believe it possible that a stranger should

not be struck with the perpetual movement on this river." One regrets that the foreign visitor no longer approaches London by the Thames, now girdled with its miles of docks!

The Baron passed under "famous London Bridge, one of the finest in the world . . . but spoilt by the mean houses and shops on either side of it." He recalls how Queen Elizabeth stuck up Essex's head on one of the towers.

He landed at Whitehall stairs; the Palace had been burnt almost to the ground years before, "only the grand Pavilion, of fine architecture, remains, used as a chapel." Like Mr. Alfred Jingle, he noticed the window through which Charles I passed to his execution. The horror of that monarch's fate preyed much upon the minds of eighteenth-century courtiers, permeated with the worship of Royalty.

He drove through St. James's Park, "to London what the Tuileries is to Paris, and as full of people. . . . But what spoils the promenading is that the crowd is so mixed, livery and the commonest folk walking there as well as people of quality." He thought the "canal" which ran through the Park fine, and the alleys well-kept, especially that called "the Mail" (*sic*), but the old palace of St. James, where the King lived, "like the convent it was formerly, rather than a Royal Palace."

The guards on duty both at St. James's and Whitehall—

"The smartest I have ever seen, such fine figures, and not, as elsewhere, parade soldiers; on enlisting they must show a certificate of having seen service—the Body-guards in scarlet with gold on the seams, always booted when on duty; the Horse Guards the same, but with pale blue caps on which are embroidered in gold and silver the order of the Garter. The Halberdiers' uniform most extraordinary, dressed in old-world fashion, scarlet with a galoon of the King's livery of blue velvet with a gold braid in the centre, black velvet cap with white

plumes ; the Foot Guards in scarlet with blue facings and badges of their colonel's colours."

The Baron had been recommended to lodge in the quarter of St. Anne (Soho ?) with some French refugees—pleasant people—and, after taking a few days to recover from his voyage, made ready to appear at Court. But all his efforts for presentation were in vain. For once in his life Pöllnitz found himself debarred from crossing a royal threshold. His dear cousin, Henrietta Charlotte, had, he says, set the King and the German courtiers against him. However, the Princess of Wales remembered old days, not only those when the Baron was welcomed at the Electress Sophia Charlotte's Court, but earlier, at the Prussia Court, where, on the death of her parents, she had been so well brought up by her aunt, the wife of Frederic I. She sent Pöllnitz a present ; but the Germans at Court followed their master's example, and so he had perforce to content himself with English society, finding several old friends he had known in Paris, who showed him the sights of London.

The above is the Baron's own version of his ostracism from court circles during his first visit to England in 1721. But there is another side to the medal. Lack of money had driven him to an expedient to raise some, which hardly does him credit.

He had, as we know, been much at Zell, and was therefore in full possession of all the circumstances connected with the imprisonment at Ahlden, near by, of the errant Dorothea, wife of George I. Pöllnitz now conceived the audacious idea of blackmailing the King, by raising the veil of mystery which the latter had thrown over his wife's fate. Under the title of *Cunegunde, Princesse des Cherusques*, he wrote her story, but thinly disguised. The Government became alarmed. The Hanoverian King was none too popular in Great Britain, and the recent Jacobite rising, though abortive, had shown how zealous and powerful was the Stuart party. The British Resident at the Hague

got wind of Pöllnitz's design. He wrote to the Secretary of State, Townshend, that a certain Baron von Pöllnitz was coming to England, with defamatory papers concerning the King, and advised that they should be confiscated. George had no desire that his treatment of his wife, cruel even to inhumanity, should be made known.

Pöllnitz was therefore cold-shouldered in London. Townshend would not answer his letter. Then he tried his luck with the ladies of the Opposition, the Duchess of Marlborough, and "milady Q——," who, doubtless he thought, would be greedy for scandal about the Hanoverian Court. But he had no better luck, and "Cunegunde" retired into obscurity for many years.

Though full of magnificent buildings, in Pöllnitz's opinion London could not be counted among the fine cities. "Its streets are dirty and ill-paved; its brick houses are very low, without architectural ornament, and blackened by the pitiless coal-smoke, which gives it a gloomy air, and detracts from its pleasantness."

The sightseeing began with St. Paul's, "the largest and finest Church in Europe after S. Peter's at Rome." But, of course, he did not approve of the Gothic towers added to the Renaissance façade, and wished, as we all do nowadays, that the site of the cathedral had been such as to do it full justice. As for Queen Anne's statue outside, "she holds in her right hand a sceptre, which resembles a wax candle; one would say she was making an *amende honorable*" before a French Court of Justice.

The interior of the cathedral struck the Baron as plain as the exterior was fine; only the choir painted, and that in grey, and the sculpture poor. The choir he thought too small in proportion to the nave; it was "surrounded by little boxes, like the boxes at a theatre"; he is speaking probably of the stalls, for our Baron is not *au fait* in church arrangements. He calls the Bishop's seat, "raised on a daïs, like that of cathedral



bishops," the throne of the Archbishop of "Cantorbery," and the Dean's seat, by the entrance to the choir, that of the Bishop of London.

Upon leaving St. Paul's the Baron and his guide took hackney coach to Westminster. "These are very common conveyances in London, but, as they have no springs, they are unbearably rough. Otherwise they are useful for getting over the ground in a short time; the horses, which are fairly good, nearly always go at a gallop, and that over the worst pavement in Europe." Twenty years later the Baron was instrumental in introducing hackney coaches in Berlin.

As he jolted over the London cobbles of the period he regretted the paving-stones of Paris, and tells us how Louis XIV offered to exchange paving-stones for gravel with Charles II. "Had he done so the King of England would have had by far the best of the bargain, for he would have paved all the streets of his capital, while the King of France would only have secured gravel paths for his gardens."

At Westminster Abbey, "which has no beauty but its bulk," Pöllnitz was shown St. Edward's Coronation Chair, which he confuses with the stone of Scone. In a cupboard near by was an effigy of General "Manck" (*sic*), and in a chapel not far off the wax statue of Charles II, in his garter and robes, and of her Grace of Richmond in her ducal robes. But of the chapels and the tombs few struck him as worthy of "notice." (!)

"Among the relics" was one which Pöllnitz did not think "could be equalled for antiquity, as it is the stone which Jacob used as a pillow when the mysterious ladder appeared to him in a dream. This precious relic is much neglected, and I do not know how pious King James II could leave it thus. The English should present it to the Venetian Republic, as it would match well with the Stone of Moses in S. Mark's Cathedral. Cardinal Cienfuegos, during my last visit to Rome, showed me a piece of it; he said he had stolen it when

he passed through London, charged with a mission from the Emperor to George I. He added that it was the only theft that he had committed in his life, and that he would have scrupled to do it had the stone been honoured in England as it should be. But seeing it so neglected and despised, he could not help saving a piece, and had seized a moment when the guide's back was turned, when he had been lucky enough to knock off a piece with a key, and had kept it. I told him that he need not have been over-scrupulous about the theft, as, for not more than a guinea, he could have had a much larger piece, and perhaps they would have let him carry off the whole stone. 'Ah! *Dieu!*' exclaimed the Cardinal, raising his eyes to heaven, 'I wish I had bought it!'

In the Abbey the Baron ran against an old acquaintance, an English nobleman, who took him to the Houses of Parliament. He was lucky enough to see the King come in state, in a coach and six, and his royal robes, to prorogue the Parliament.

"Except on such occasions," says the Baron, "he is carried in a sedan-chair, footmen precede him, and six halberdiers walk on either side." Special to the English Court he thought "the black velvet caps, like huntsmen's caps, which the King's livery servants wear."

The sight of the King upon his throne, the Prince of Wales at his side, and his peers on benches on either hand, much impressed the Baron.

"When I saw the best and most just of Monarchs come to confirm what the peers of his kingdom, or rather, the fathers of the people, had decided, methought to see Augustus at the Capitol ratifying the decrees of the Senate, and the Senate applauding the acts of the Emperor. Yet the Parliament does not always acquiesce in the wishes of the King; on the contrary, it knows how to oppose them firmly when they impugn

public liberty. It is true that, since the last Revolution, which deprived the House of Stuart of the throne, the Kings have always been on good terms with their Parliaments. Such is the temperament of the Nation ; a King mild and just is loved and respected by it, he finds minds as docile as the tyrannical King finds them the opposite. All those who censure the English for their want of loyalty to their King have not read history well, or else advocate slavery ; and those who pity a King of Great Britain for not being absolute have an erroneous idea of Royalty. A King of England can do as much good as any King in the world, but he can do no wrong. What can a gentlemanly King (forgive me the expression, this title is not unworthy of a King) want more ? Is it not enough to satisfy his ambition ? And can a man be pitied for not having the power to make millions miserable ? As for me I think that the English who do not stand up for their laws and their liberty are as criminal as those who oppose their Sovereign's wishes in a State where Despotism is established."

After the King had passed by, the Baron went " to dine with milord——, whose brother I had known in Spain." With him he stayed all the afternoon, and then milord took him to the Opera, which delighted Pöllnitz very much, " the best voices in Europe, and the orchestra could not be better, or larger." But he preferred the Paris opera, because there was no ballet, or only a very poor one, in London. The dresses, indeed, were much richer, " but without that good taste which only a Frenchman can boast of possessing supremely." The house struck him as very plain, the chorus and supers collected from anywhere, " and often looked silly or embarrassed." But, though the candles dazzled and detracted from the effect of the stage, the fact that every one, even in the pit, had seats, and the horse-shoe arrangement, by which people sat face to face, found approval in the Baron's eyes. The King was at the

opera, in a plain box to the right, talking all the time to three ladies.

As the Baron did not speak any English on this, his first visit to England, he could form no opinion about the play when he went to the theatre, though, to judge by their appearance, the actors and the actresses seemed good.

Pöllnitz went all over the town, admired the squares—more of them than in any other city—though the centres were enclosed by railings; admired the great houses—Montague House, its garden, staircase, and frescoes; the magnificent “*hôtel* of my lord Marlborough,” with its pictures, especially the Van Dyck’s. He climbed the Monument on Fish Hill, for the view; admired the Royal Exchange, and criticized the statues of Royalty. That of Charles II he praises, and tells the story of that of Charles I, knocked down by Cromwell’s order, bought by a royalist, a worker in metal, under pretext of melting it down, buried in the ground for safety, and, finally, replaced in position at the Restoration. Such a triumph of the monarchical sentiment was quite to our Baron’s mind.

He visited the Tower, which he calls “the Bastille of London,” “though it is not so easy for a King of England to fill it as it is for a King of France to fill the Bastille.” He saw the lions which were then kept there—why or wherefore, is not now quite evident—and the Arsenal, “one of the most complete and the best kept up in Europe.” This tradition is well maintained at the present day, for though that part of the Armoury which is open to the public is merely a museum of ancient and curious weapons, there are stowed away in the vaults beneath the White Tower a considerable amount of arms of all sorts of quite up-to-date construction.

Pöllnitz gazed on the Regalia and describes the crowns. It was not long after Colonel Blood’s attempt to steal it, and Pöllnitz noted how carefully they were enclosed in a stout iron *grille*. This has quite recently, since the



loss of the Irish Crown Jewels, been strengthened, and the precautions for security elaborately improved.

The Horse Armoury, he notes, contains figures of all the Kings of England on horseback in armour, from William the Conqueror downwards. Now the Tower does contain one of the finest, if not the finest, collections of armour in the world, but can hardly be said to contain the armour of all our Kings.

To a mind like that of Pöllnitz, always maintaining that "the study of mankind is man," the English people were more interesting than the sights of their capital. With his usual perspicacity he studied them attentively during his stay, and describes them very faithfully.

At home, the Englishman seemed to him what a Frenchman is when out of his own country—proud, scornful, admiring nothing. In like manner the Englishman abroad is like the Frenchman at home, gentle, well-bred, affable. It appeared to him that, of all foreign nations, the English "only really liked the Italians, French and Germans being fairly well hated." The dislike of the latter, he thought, had originated since the Hanoverian succession, "because the people thought that English money was being spent in Germany." They seemed to think that "we had not a sou before they invited the House of Hanover to govern them."

As to the dislike of the French, it appeared to Pöllnitz of much longer standing; "it was in the blood, and extended to small things, such as dress. It was enough for any fashion to be French, for people in England to wear the opposite," which Pöllnitz thought a pity. "For they have no taste in clothes . . . no nation dresses so badly as the English, and it is only because they are as well built as they are that they can wear such costumes."

Equally wanting in the instinct for dress the Baron thought the English ladies, "though with good figures, mostly pretty, and pleasant to become acquainted with. . . . Though always very neat and clean, they seem

to try to disfigure themselves." However, the long cloak with slits for arms, and the hood tied under the chin, was not unbecoming to pretty people. It was used "for going out when *en déshabillé*, especially by the *bourgeoisie*, and also by gay ladies going to rendezvous at inns by the river in mysterious boats, covered and lined with scarlet cloth, and rowed by boatmen as discreet as the Venetian gondoliers."

Strange as it may appear, Pöllnitz, though so used to the French, and the vivacious southern nations, speaks of the English populace as lively and fond of amusing themselves. In other countries he found it was only the rich who had pleasures. "Next to play, fights amuse them most," such as bull-fights and cock-fights, which he describes at length, adding that "no other nation in the world likes to bet as much as the English." He also saw gladiatorial combats, as he calls them, "wretches fighting with naked swords, and often wounding each other, a very popular exhibition." It is difficult to understand exactly what Pöllnitz means; is he confusing fencing and prize-fighting? On a summer's evening in the St. James's district, he saw quarterstaff and wrestling, both of which led to considerable betting.

He went down to Hampton Court, "a fine country-house, but not much in comparison to the royal country residences in France." He liked Kensington Palace, where alterations were being made, and the pictures it contained, but the gardens he thought not fine enough. (!)

The small hope that Pöllnitz had of obtaining any employment at the English Court, and the fact that his money was running out, made him in a hurry to leave London. After but a month's stay he left for Holland. It took him five days to cross, as he was becalmed half way, and then off the mouth of the Meuse he met with a violent gale. From Rotterdam he went to The Hague the same day, to renew his wardrobe and refit his carriage. For this it was necessary to borrow money.

## CHAPTER XXI

CHARLES and Maurice von Pöllnitz had still been under age at the death of their grandmother, Eleanora of Nassau, who had bequeathed her fortune between these two grandsons and her niece, Henrietta Charlotte. The latter, as the eldest of the family, claimed the right of receiving the income from it; it was paid over to her entirely, for her receipt. She then handed over a third to Charles and Maurice respectively, continuing to do so even after these two had attained their majorities.

Upon this income the Baron, on arriving at The Hague, gave assignments to a money-lender. He gladly accepted these, but he required a further guarantee that Henrietta Charlotte would pay them. Pöllnitz begged him to write to her on the subject—

“ But, as this kind relative never wished me any good, she thought well to cross me about the scheme that I had planned to make money. She did not honour me myself with any reply, but wrote to my creditors, and warned them not to trust me; saying that I was only trying to take them in, that I had no share in this income, and that what I told them about it was a lie. My money-lenders were aghast at such news, and thought that they were dealing with a thief who was laying a trap for them, and against whom they would be powerless if I managed to escape. On my part I did all I could to reassure them. I told them that Fräulein von Pöllnitz had not spoken the truth, and that I was doing my best to make her cancel the letters that she had written. Further, I offered to pay them out of the money I was going to draw from my estates. But

all I said to them had no effect ; their suspicions were so deeply rooted that, in order to make sure of their debts, they decided to have me arrested.

“ This they did, and, one Sunday morning, I saw very ungracious visitors arrive to beg me to betake myself with a good grace to the prisons of The Hague, unless I wished to be removed thither by force. I was somewhat staggered by this visit, foreseeing myself losing my liberty, and for a long time, when Madame Pyll, a Hague shopkeeper, to whom I already owed something, was kind enough to advance me what was necessary to pay off my creditors, and so I extricated myself from their importunate grip.

“ But, a few days after this adventure, other creditors, who had got wind of what had happened, thought that if they acted in the same way they would infallibly be paid. So they also decided to have me arrested.

“ In fact, at six in the morning I was warned that something was on foot against me, and that constables were approaching to seize me. I had my boots on and was in my dressing-gown, but I thought it best not to amuse myself by finishing dressing, and as I knew that there were not many people about in the streets of The Hague at that hour, I decided to escape in my dressing-gown. I fled to my dear Madame Pyll. I should have wished this kind shopkeeper to have again appeased these mad dogs, but I dare not suggest it to her. I only asked her to keep me hidden for a time. This she did with pleasure. But I soon had to flee again. The constables had been told of my retreat, and were coming to drag me out of it, when the shopkeeper let me out by a back door. She lent me a cloak in which to wrap myself, and, thus disguised, I thought only of getting out of The Hague.

“ I got into the boat for Delft, and sought out Texena, a rich Portuguese, who had a house a league out of the town.”

Texena proved a generous friend to Pöllnitz, lending



him money, and sending him to the château of Houslardyck, where he stayed two days. The wife of the porter there had been lady's maid to Pöllnitz's mother, and did all in her power for him. She went to Mme Pyll and told her where the Baron was. The latter brought him his luggage.

Afraid of returning to the town to deal with the creditors who were following him, lest others should appear and demand a settlement, Pöllnitz decided to go to Germany. Thence he could write home and settle his affairs, for, on account of some unknown reason, he was still forbidden to go to Berlin.

He made up his mind to seek out Count L——, to whom he had lent two hundred ducats seven or eight years before, and who was in the Elector Palatine's service. Pöllnitz had been told that the Count was quartered at Aix-la-Chapelle. He went by Bois-le-Duc, thence, "in a vehicle they call a diligence" to Maestricht. There he fell in with an Englishman, on his way to drink the waters at Aix, and "evidently overloaded with guineas, as every moment he exclaimed about the cheapness of things on this side of the sea." But a little adventure at Maestricht made him change his mind. He went out alone when they arrived, saying that he was going to take a walk.

Falling into doubtful company at a tavern—

"When he had emptied several bottles he laid down a guinea. The hostess demanded another. The Englishman demurred, and grew angry over the price asked. Doubtless he failed in respect towards the good company in which he found himself. The angry landlady threw herself upon the Englishman like a lunatic. This fury was abetted by two others, and all three beat the Englishman, tore his cravat, and turned him out of the door without returning him his wig.

"To make matters worse it poured, was pitch dark, and he could not see his way. He did not know how to ask it, and moreover, had forgotten the name of his inn,

and that of the street in which he had alighted. Tired of running about the streets in such weather, he began to knock at every door, only receiving abuse in reply. The watch surprised him while he was making all this noise, and took him to the guard-room. . . . Happily the officer on duty believed his story, and lent him a cloak and an escort. They went round knocking at several inns, which were not the one he wanted, and, unless he had had the escort with him there would certainly have been an uproar. Finally, as they were wandering about seeking an inn, which neither one nor the other knew, the Englishman's servant, who was himself looking for his master, met him and brought him home."

But the adventure caused Pöllnitz a very bad night. The Englishman was to sleep in his room, and the Baron, very tired, had gone to bed directly after supper.

"The Englishman's servant, who was waiting for his master in my room, annoyed me awfully; finding it growing late and his master not returned, he came, from time to time, to consult me as to what he should do, and it was I, who, in order to get rid of him, suggested that he should go out and look for him. But, directly they returned, I had to hear the whole story of the adventure. The servant waxed exceedingly wroth with the good people who had insulted his master; he suggested that they should sally forth at once, break in the doors, and throw everything out of window. However, his master thought it better to bear his insults with patience, and to rest from his fatigues."

Pöllnitz did not find Count L—— at Aix; he was in the Palatinate. So he bade adieu to his Englishman, and went to Cologne, "the dullest town in Europe, nothing heard but the ringing of bells, and monks and students, singing for alms. There are more houses than people. But the inhabitants are well lodged. The citizen must be poor indeed who does not live in a house

to himself." Bonn was infinitely preferable as a residence to the ecclesiastical city, and hither the Bishop, the exiled Elector, whom the Baron had visited when he was living under French protection during the war, at Valenciennes, had returned. A very martial Bishop, wearing, to every one's surprise, a long sword, as the Head of a Military Order, but withal a nice-looking, good-living man, fond of hunting, in moderation. The Electorate of Cologne was the bulwark of Romanism among Protestant States.

When the Elector returned he found his good town of Bonn in a terrible state from the devastations of the war, houses destroyed, the palace ruined. He restored everything, built a new palisade round the city, and, later on, built the peculiar château at Popalsdorf, in the shape of a circle.

At Cologne Pöllnitz fell ill with fever; but he pushed on up the Rhine by boat "to avoid the disagreeable mountains of Wataravia," and was not tired, only rather bored, though stopping at Linz to refill his canteen with some of the good Rhine wine of that district, which he had much appreciated at Liége. Then on to Andernach. "Here the Rhine becomes restrained by high mountains, high enough to recall to me unpleasant memories of the Alps. These furious rocks are cultivated to their summits, and produce excellent wines." The river at Andernach was crowded with great rafts of timber being propelled down stream on their journey to Holland, by boatmen, who lived in little sheds built on them. Andernach was a great place for the sale of bottles and stone jars containing the mineral waters of Dunchstein, to drink with the wine. Across the Rhine Pöllnitz was pointed out the ruined castle of the Count of Neuwied, "where the vulgar think the Devil lives." The Count of Neuwied's wife was an acquaintance of the Baron's, being a daughter of Count Dohna, tutor to Frederic William in the old days when he and Pöllnitz were boys together at the Académie des Nobles.

But our Baron was not in health for society. At

Andernach the fever returned, and he was so ill that he could proceed no farther. The hostess of the inn suggested a clever doctor a few leagues off, and Pöllnitz "dragged himself thither." In a fortnight the fever had left him. So he went on to Coblenz, where Count Schönborn, Bishop of Treves, lived in the palace below Ehrenbreitstein. There he felt worse than ever, and went down again to the same doctor, where he spent another fortnight. He grew worse, however, his head "became as weak as his body," and he thought he should never recover where he was. Moreover, he took a great dislike to the doctor. He declined to see him any more, and, in spite of all warnings against attempting to travel, put himself back in the boat for Cologne. Here he went to a doctor he knew, whose drugs, "either because of their virtue or because of the strength of my imagination," gradually cured the fever.

When quite well again Pöllnitz rowed up the Rhine once more to Mainz. He chronicles the fortress of Rheinfels, above S. Goar, with a long and glorious history of defence, and then strongly garrisoned by the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; but, with the singular insensibility of his century to beauty of scenery, is silent with regard to his journey up the most lovely part of the Rhine Valley. The Bingenloch is only "the fall of the Rhine between two rocks, the most dangerous passage of all the Rhine; but there is nothing to fear, unless your rowers are drunk, which is common enough here, where the juice of the grape is to be had for next to nothing." He declined, with his usual scepticism, to believe the story of the "Rats' Tower and the barbarous prelate," and his rowers told him that he "was not a good Catholic."

The Baron is far more interested in the different brands of Rhenish wine.

"Bingen has the best in all the Rheingau. The wine at Bacharach, sung by the French in drinking songs, is out of fashion with *gourmets*, who are so delicate here



that they will tell you the year and the brand by only moistening their lips. It is said that Ridelsbach and Johannesberg are the best; my taste, not so delicate, found Bacharach quite good, and I could make myself happy if obliged to drink nothing else."

Pöllnitz had hoped to find his relations at Mainz, but they were on their estates in Franconia, "which embarrassed me very much, for I really did not know what to do." So he decided to go to his brother at Zell, and happily found a vehicle at Frankfurt, going to Hanover. No question of post-chaises now! But, when he reached Zell, he found his brother was at Berlin!

Pöllnitz decided to go there, but, upon consideration, not wishing to be seen at Berlin, went to Leipzig, whence he wrote to his man of business, "to know how matters stood, and if it were not possible to put my affairs in some order."

The reply was that no arrangement was possible so long as the estates were attached. That, indeed, a loan might enable his client to arrange with the creditors, but that he did not see his way to raising one, as Fräulein von Pöllnitz, on whom the Baron's property was entailed, would not agree to it. He ended by saying that the only way was to obtain a Letter of Command from the King of Prussia.

"I knew as well as he did that a Letter of Command was the shortest way of extricating me from my predicament; but how to get it, when I had not permission to appear at Court! However, I thought that I ought to leave no stone unturned in order to obtain this permission, which had been refused me so often."

So Pöllnitz decided to implore the patronage of the Prince of Anhalt-Dessau, who, with his sister, had so often been kind to their relative. He went to Dessau, which is only six leagues from Leipzig.

The Prince was not expected home till the evening, but the Duchess of Radzivil, his eldest sister, in response to poor Pöllnitz's prayers, kindly sent one of her people to him, promising to do all she could for him, and asking for a letter to show her brother. Pöllnitz had great hopes, which, however, were soon to be shattered.

Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau was Frederic William's great friend, straightforward to bluntness, austere, like himself. His only reply was to suggest to his sister to get Pöllnitz out of Dessau as soon as possible, as, if he stayed there, he should be obliged to arrest him! The Duchess couched this reply in as gracious terms as she could, and added a sum of money of which she made no doubt that Pöllnitz had need.

The latter knew the bluff soldier with whom he had to deal. He doubted not that his acts would follow quickly on his threats, and so promptly ordered a chaise to convey him to the Court of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, where he had a friend.

"But I could find neither horse nor chaise in all the little town of Dessau; no one would stir on account of the sanctity of the day (it was the fourth Sunday in Advent). But so much was I in dread of the Prince's anger that I determined to start on foot. I took my portmanteau, then my only baggage, put it on a man's shoulder, and walked with him to a little town in the Duchy of Magdeburg, where I took a chaise for Barbi."

Here Pöllnitz was well received by his old friend the Baron de Chaselac. He was a native of Guienne, one of the many French refugees who had sought shelter in Prussia in the seventeenth century, and had been appointed tutor to the fatherless young Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau. Pöllnitz tells a story of the relationship between tutor and pupil which does credit to both.

Chaselac found the young Prince to be of an impetuous temperament which he had some difficulty in

moderating. He took him for a tour in Italy. Now Leopold had fallen desperately in love with a Fräulein von Fohsen at the Court of Prussia. This inclination did not please his mother, the Princess of Orange, who imagined that, by sending him away, she could cure him of his passion.

“Chaselac, who has been my special friend, and whose memory I hold dear, has told me that the great vivacity and unruliness of the Prince often gave him much trouble ; but that yet, notwithstanding any excesses into which the Prince fell, he could always bring him back by appealing to his honour and his ambition. He told me in reference to this, how, when at Venice, the Prince came in one morning drunk, after having spent the night in debauchery. M. de Chaselac upbraided him for his conduct in perhaps too strong terms, at least the young Prince thought so.

“He ran and seized a pistol, and, pointing it at his tutor, cried : ‘ Dog ! I must kill you ! ’

“M. de Chaselac, without being disconcerted, looked straight at the Prince : ‘ Very well, kill me,’ he replied. ‘ But think what a blot it will be on history when people read that a Prince of Anhalt, a Prince of a family which has given Emperors to Germany, has assassinated his tutor ! ’

“These words, spoken authoritatively, made a deep impression upon the young Prince.

“‘ *Ma foi !* ’ he said, putting up his pistol. ‘ You’re right. I was going to do a vile deed ! ’”

Leopold, it may be added, returned from Italy as much in love with Fräulein von Fohsen as ever. He married her at twenty-two, and they had a large family.

The man who could thus check Anhalt was not likely, if he thought it right, to spare poor Pöllnitz, now in chastened mood, and in very low water. Though he received him “as well as he could have wished,” he scolded him on the state of his affairs, and advised him

to go and find his brother, and to concert with him suitable steps about their property. He lent Pöllnitz forty crowns for the journey, and kept him with him till over Christmas, by which time Maurice von Pöllnitz was back at Zell.

Charles found his brother well disposed towards him. Maurice raised his suspicions about his man of business, advising him to change him for his own, who was reliable. Charles gave his brother full powers to examine his lawyer's accounts, and Maurice pointed out to him where he had been cheated. But he went further. He gave Charles money, and put his affairs on such a footing that, in a short time, the latter was able to satisfy his creditors, and yet keep sufficient to live upon.

"It was then a question of knowing which way to turn that one might be able at least to say that one had done something in this world. I should have liked the army, but there was no war, nor any sign of any soon."

Pöllnitz had knocked in vain at the door of too many palaces to wish to begin again. "I might indeed have returned to Spain, where I had found employment, but what was to become of me when the salaries were in arrears, and I had to keep up appearances?"

There seemed no career open, no profession that he could adopt. Then some one suggested the Church.

"This proposal seemed to me, at first, a little odd; yet, when I began to think about it, I perceived that, perhaps, it would not be a bad line to take, that, sooner or later, I should not fail to obtain something; in short, a number of very human motives gave birth in my mind to a plan which could not have been other than a vocation." (!)

After this extraordinary statement we learn that the Baron was advised to pay his respects to the Cardinal



de Saxe, who was at Regensburg. This Prince, himself a Lutheran who had become a Catholic, made much of converts.

Maurice von Pöllnitz accompanied his brother as far as Brunswick. At that Court, also well inclined to any one who had followed the Duke's example and become a Romanist, they remained some days. Then Pöllnitz went to Barbi, to de Chaselac. The latter was delighted with the arrangements Charles had made with his brother, and with the frame of mind in which he found him. After spending a few days with his friend, Pöllnitz went by Leipzig, Zeitz, Hof, Bayreuth, and Erlangen to Nuremberg.

After two days' stay "in one of the dullest towns in Europe," he went on to Eichstädt, having a letter of introduction to the Prince-Bishop of that see.

The Bishop received Pöllnitz very graciously, and with much ceremony, "sending one of his coaches to fetch me. He was seated because he was suffering severely from gout, and begged me to be seated also. After a long conversation, he invited me to supper." An excellent concert by his large band afterwards took place in his room.

For five or six days Pöllnitz, full of his newly conceived ecclesiastical project, paid his respects at Eichstädt—

"And when I left the Bishop presented me with a large snuff-box, weighing twenty-five ducats, which he took out of a cabinet he showed me, and where I saw a quantity of valuable jewels, including a cross of diamonds worth five or six hundred florins. This prelate had the politeness to defray my bill at the inn, so that I was much astonished, when I came to settle, to find that I owed nothing, except to this Prince."

## CHAPTER XXII

THE Baron spent four months at Regensburg, paying his court to the Cardinal Commissioner of the Emperor to the Diet, in the hope of receiving from that functionary some ecclesiastical preferment, in return for which he was quite in the mood to take the tonsure.

Cardinal de Saxe was a brother of the Duke of Saxe-Zeitz, one of the several branches of the house of Wettin. Both the brothers were converts to Roman Catholicism. At the death of the Duke, who left only a daughter, the duchy, which should have passed to the Cardinal and one of his nephews, was wrested from them by an article in the Treaty of Westphalia, on account of their change of religion. The King of Poland, as head of the Saxon family, took possession of the duchy, paying the debts of the late Duke, and granting a sum of money to the Cardinal and the young Princes. He governed the little State by a Regency.

Austria, ever favourably disposed to converts, had not only bestowed upon the Cardinal the coveted purple, but also had appointed him Imperial Commissioner to the Diet, the most distinguished piece of patronage in the Emperor's hands. The Commissioner yielded precedence to no monarch, nor to any delegate to the Diet. His pomp and state were in keeping with his dignity. He kept guards and was served by gentlemen, and when he gave audience to the Electoral Envoys he did not receive them upon terms of equality, and the coveted arm-chair played an important part in the ceremony. The delegates of the Free Cities of the Empire were only allowed a straight-backed seat. When the Commissioner

entertained the envoys of the Electors and Princes at dinner, he himself sat in the chief place.

Several of these latter spoke to the Cardinal in Pöllnitz's favour, and it appeared to them that he was well inclined to our hero. But time slipped away, and nothing came of the Cardinal's civility. Pöllnitz, therefore, determined to bring him to the point.

“The Cardinal was kind enough not to refuse me to my face ; he sent me word, by the envoy of an Elector who had been interpolating on my behalf, that it was no use my waiting at Regensburg, as he could do nothing for me. He even added, without giving any reason, that, even if the whole Diet should intercede in my favour, he could not help me. This speech did not appear to me sufficiently ambiguous for me to continue my appeal.”

The Baron, however, could not tear himself away before the great entertainment with which Count Plattenberg, whom he had met when at Cologne, was about to celebrate his master the Bishop of Münster's elevation to the coadjutorship of Cologne, and at the same time the marriage of the same master's brother, Charles Albert, Electoral Prince of Bavaria—Pöllnitz's companion on the Salzburg trip—to the Emperor's niece, daughter of the late Emperor Joseph. For the occasion Plattenberg had a hall built and several tents put up outside the gates of Regensburg. The Cardinal de Saxe was present, all the Envoys and their wives, and the *beau monde* of the city of the Diet. There was supper in the hall, cards in the tents, fireworks, and a ball which lasted till dawn.

The following day the Cardinal left for Hungary, to preside as Primate of the Diet at Buda. It had been specially convened to arrange about the succession. The Emperor Charles VI had only two daughters, and it was important that the eldest, Maria Theresa, should inherit the Hapsburg hereditary dominions.

Pöllnitz took his leave of the Electoral Ministers and Envoys.

“ I had received all sorts of kindnesses from these, and most of them were not content with treating me as politely as possible ; they had gone further, and, knowing the situation of my affairs, had acted towards me with a generosity of which I shall retain an eternal gratitude, happy if some day I could afford them proof of it ! The only I can now give is to mention them by name.”

Count von Königsfelt, whom the Baron had known during the merry summer he had spent at his master's Court at Munich and at Nymphenberg, “ was one of those who worked hardest with the Cardinal to try and gain for me what I wished. This Minister spent money lavishly at Regensburg,” and lived in great splendour. Baron von Kirchner, the Deputy of the Cardinal Commissioner, who bore the title of the Commissioner of the Diet, Herr von Finsberg, Envoy of Hanover, Durrenberg, Envoy of Hesse-Cassel, von Hagen, Envoy of the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, all Courts where Pöllnitz had been well received and appreciated, warmly supported Kirchner's appeal for him, and, what was more, freely opened their purses to him.

Business now called Pöllnitz to Düsseldorf to confer with his brother over a lawsuit which they and their cousin Henrietta Charlotte had undertaken together. On his way the Baron stayed a few days at Würzburg. It was the Festival of St. Kilian, the patron saint of the great cathedral, famous for its magnificent tapestries of stories of the Old Testament, its solid silver vases, candelabra, and images of the saints.

The Duke-Bishop of Franconia was the richest and the most distinguished of the three great ecclesiastical rulers in Central Germany, and during the five years of his episcopate one of the most magnificent of the prelates who had ever occupied the see. The Baron saw him in all his glory, “ his Court and Household larger



than that of any other German Prince," go in grand procession to the cathedral.

A man of great taste and a lover of art, this magnificent Duke-Bishop was building on to the cathedral a chapel lined with marble, and full of gilt bronze; on it Italian workmen were engaged, working in great haste, "because," as the Bishop told Pöllnitz, "I intend it for my burial-place."

As the road leading up to the old castle on the hill above the town was too steep for coaches, this princely prelate was also busy building the vast Renaissance palace which we admire to-day. He had designed it himself, but in four years only two-thirds of the huge building had been completed, and, though roofed in, it was unfinished at his death.

The Bishop showed Pöllnitz the plan of the palace as it was to be when completed, "one of the finest in Europe . . . three hundred and fifty feet frontage, and five great courtyards. . . . The staircase to be of marble, likewise the chapel, guard-room, and state apartments." In order to lay out the gardens, the Bishop was throwing down ramparts and filling ditches. Immense, massive, splendid, the palace appears to us to-day more imposing than Versailles.

Pöllnitz saw the fine hall in the Grand Hospital, with sculpture, gilded and painted, where the Bishop, on Holy Thursday, was wont to wash the paupers' feet and serve them at meals. There were sixteen of these hospitals in Würzburg, used not only for the sick, but also as almshouses, or workhouses, for the poor. Built by a former Bishop, "it looked more like the palace of a Prince." Behind lay beautifully kept gardens for walking in, with an orangery and fountains.

Our Baron toiled up the steep hill to the old castle, and inspected first the well-stored arsenal, holding arms for some forty thousand men, "a temple of Mars rather than the palace of a Minister of Peace." He then descended into the vast cellars.

If the arsenal was—

“ Filled with all that Mars and Bellona have invented for the destruction of man, the cellars are provided with all that can satisfy an army of drunkards. If you are coming here, and your curiosity leads you to these warehouses of Mars and Bacchus, I advise you to begin with the arsenal, especially should you be escorted by any gentleman of this Court, who, though very polite, consider that every visitor owes it to them to lose his wits in these cellars. I speak from experience.

“ Three days ago, I happened to say to the Bishop that I wished to see the castle. The Prince, to do me honour, ordered one of his gentlemen to accompany me thither. This good man, apparently afraid lest I should be bored by a *tête-à-tête*, made up a *parti carré*; he chose two drinkers whom Silenus would not have disowned for his offspring. Being unaware of these gentlemen's eminent qualities, I abandoned myself into their hands without the slightest suspicion of any misfortune. They showed me everything—state apartments, arsenal, fortifications, and then took me to the cellar, which I found lit up like a *chapelle ardente* which was to be used for my funeral. This latter was conducted with all pomp. The clink of the glasses served as bells; for tears, wine was poured forth; and at last, when the service was over, two Hungarian haiduks bore me to a coach, and thence to my bed, which was to be my grave.

“ I rose again, but I am not sure yet if I am quite sober. It is true that this does not trouble me, for, since I have been staying here, I have adopted the laudable custom of getting drunk twice a day. You perceive that I benefit by my travels, and adopt the good habits of the countries where I make some stay. I hope you will find me much improved, and for the better. Nothing forms character so much as travel; you can judge of it by the life I lead here.

“ I rise at ten o'clock, my head still very hot from the wine I have drunk the night before. I take a great deal of tea, I dress, and I go and pay my respects to

the Bishop. The Baron von Pechtelsheim, the Court-Marshal, invites me to dine with this Prince. He promises, and even swears, that I shall not drink. We sit down to table at noon. The Bishop does me the honour to drink two or three times to my health. The Baron von Zobel, Grand Equerry, and the Baron von Pechtelsheim drunk the same; I have to drink with fourteen people who are at table. I find myself submerged before I begin to eat. We rise, I accompany the Prince to the door of his chamber, he retires, and I hope to do the same, when I find myself the prisoner in the anteroom of the Grand Equerry and the Court-Marshal, who, with big glasses in their hands, drink to the Prince's health, 'and to the eternal prosperity of the most worthy Chapter of Würzburg.'

"I protest that I am the Bishop's humble servant, and that I have much respect for the most worthy Chapter, but that to drink to their health impairs my own; and I implore them to allow that I do not comply with their request. Vain words; I am obliged to drink these two healths, or to appear as not being a well-wisher to the Prince and his Chapter. Happy if I get off with this!

"But Herr Zobel, one of the most intrepid drinkers of our century, seizes my hand and says to me, with a most sincere and cordial manner: 'You are too devoted to our Prince not to drink to the illustrious House of Houtten!'

"After these touching words he empties a large glass as witness of his zeal for his master's kin. An officious haiduk brings me a glass, and, inspired by the spirit which pervades this Court, he assures me that this wine cannot harm me, because it is the same which the Prince drinks. Reassured by such a good reason, I drink; the next moment I reel and am helpless; then, to finish me off, Pechtelsheim, one of the best-bred men of our time, but also the hardest drinker I know, accosts me with a smiling air, saying: '*Allons!* my dear Baron! one more glass to our friendship!'

“ I implore him to grant me quarter ; he embraces me, kisses me, calls me his dear brother. How can I resist such loving words ? At last I arrive at such a state that I can only walk in zigzags. I find a way of escape, I get down the stairs as best I can, and stuff myself into a sedan-chair. I reach home, my people receive me like a corpse, and place me on a bed to await my funeral.

“ I sleep for three or four hours, awake miraculously, pay visits, or receive them ; but, whichever I do, I soon find myself in a condition of not being able to walk alone. There is never a *tête-à-tête* here but the bottle is always admitted as *en tiers*. I am inclined to the belief that the inhabitants of this place are the descendants of Silenus, and that their ancestral drunkard left them, as a legacy, the gift of drinking, just as St. Hubert has left to his family the gift of curing madness.

“ I dined yesterday with the Reverend Fathers the Scotch Benedictines. They gave me a good table and some excellent wine, called Stein wine, apparently because it grows on a rock.”

Life at Würzburg was gay. During Carnival the Prince-Bishop entertained the nobility at great banquets, gave balls, and even masquerades, at Court, though he himself was a cultivated, intellectual man who did not care for pomp, but rose early in the morning and devoted himself to affairs of State with his Council and his Ministers. But he had perforce to maintain the traditions of the Court. During the winter society assembled at different houses for cards, and in Carnival time there was a ball three days a week in a house kept by a caterer, and supported by subscription ; but visitors were allowed in free.

“ All this was pleasant enough if the company had not sometimes been disturbed by drunkards. It is true that these do not trouble the inhabitants very much—they are used to it ; even the ladies, who else-



where avoid these sort of people, do not seem here to have any particular repugnance to them. Visitors have really every reason to be satisfied with the civility of the Prince and his courtiers. As for me, I had reason to be exceedingly pleased with the attentions paid me. The Prince loaded me with kindness, and the nobility with civility. But for being obliged to drink, I should have enjoyed myself much in this city."

Pöllnitz was rowed down the Main, admiring the lovely views of smiling vineyards and fine country-houses, to Frankfort. Here he received a piece of news which could not have sorely afflicted him. Cousin Henrietta Charlotte was dead. She had bequeathed her estates to Charles and Maurice, but the rest of her fortune to her mother, who was yet alive.

But, on arriving at Düsseldorf, the Baron found his brother's satisfaction at having inherited the property somewhat damped, for they had lost the suit on which they and their cousin had embarked. "My brother was in a very bad temper with the Judges who had decided against us. As for me, ever accustomed to ill-luck, I endeavoured to comfort him. . . . It is evidently not in the order of Providence that we are to enjoy the good things of this life."

He advised his brother to go to Berlin and sell the property there. "The death of our dear cousin had given us the power of undertaking this sale, as the entail rested now only between my brother and me."

So Maurice went off to Berlin, and Charles betook himself to Hamburg, there to await the result of the sale. Here he spent a joyous winter. It was gayer than usual; most of the aristocracy who had houses in the neighbourhood came to them, and, in addition, there were several ministers, accredited to the Circle of Lower Saxony, who were pleasant and distinguished people. Count Nat, a lieutenant-general in the Emperor's service, and late Minister to the Duke of Holstein, with his charming wife, entertained lavishly; Count

Guldenstein made a great show and kept a very good table. Dining out daily at different houses, gambling all the rest of the day, with an occasional break for the opera, which was well performed by a good orchestra, "there was no time to be dull in a city where there was never any question of anything but amusement from morning till night."

With a good many other people in Hamburg society, Pöllnitz went for three weeks to the fair at Kiel, leaving the city a desert, for there was business done as well as pleasure at Kiel, which was so crowded that it was difficult to find rooms. The nobility assembled every evening at a house for cards, made up supper-parties, sometimes followed by a ball; in addition there was a German theatrical company. Pöllnitz paid a few days' visit to a friend's estate nine miles from Kiel.

After Easter he heard from his brother at Berlin that no purchaser was forthcoming for the estates there at the price they asked. So he decided to go thither himself to arrange matters with Maurice. He kept his incognito as much as he could, meeting only two or three friends and his lawyers. When all was settled the brothers left for Zell, till the season had arrived for Charles to go and take the waters at Carlsbad, a proceeding doubtless necessitated by his drinking bouts at Würzburg the preceding summer.

On the way thither the Baron spent some time at the Court of Blankenburg. He was well received by the Duke, in the much improved palace in the town, surrounded by a fine park, where the Duchess, a rather notorious lady, had a home-farm dairy, having imported a number of cows from Switzerland, which she kept in exceedingly clean stables.

"My plan of becoming a priest had now entirely evaporated, and I found myself free to consider seriously all the projects which passed through my head. That of entering the service of the Duke of Blankenburg was one, and directly I thought of it I took steps to carry

it out. The Privy Councillor undertook to speak for me ; at first he received favourable replies, but in the end this attempt shared the fate of all the others : I received many compliments, but I was refused."

So, after a long visit, the Baron took his leave, presenting the Duchess with two fine dogs he had brought with him, as she was such a lover of animals. In return she gave him a very good likeness of her husband on a gold medal, which was valued at twenty-five ducats.

Passing by Barbi, Pöllnitz paid his respects to fat John Adolphus, Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, in the latter's fine new palace. The Baron had known him when he was in the Prussian service under Frederic I. Thence, by Leipzig, he reached Carlsbad.

Very wearisome did Pöllnitz find the way of drinking the waters at Carlsbad.

" You must be shut up in a room, however hot it is, have the stoves lighted, torture yourself with two or three pints of water, which is about as much as twenty cups of chocolate, walk about a great deal, and pour down with sweat. The *ennui* of the morning is compensated for by the good company one sees during the day . . . many visitors, especially nobles of Bohemia and Austria. . . . A public promenade, a large hall where one meets, one plays, dines, and walks till evening. Then those who wish to follow the régime retire till supper. . . . To make yourself comfortable at Carlsbad you must bring three things : a bed, some wine, and a cook. However, a bachelor can dispense with a cook, because he is almost continually invited to dinner by the Austrian and Bohemian nobility, who entertain largely, and delight in receiving people. I have much amused myself during the season I passed there, and I have made good acquaintances who may be useful to me at Prague."

Pöllnitz took both the Sprudal and Mühlbad springs,

the latter only recently recommended by a doctor who had found it efficacious for bathing animals in.

“What I find so disagreeable is that one has to take the waters in one’s room, which one must take care to shut up tightly, because the Sprudal makes one perspire very much, and if one were to take cold one would risk getting rheumatism. One does not generally go out till about three quarters of an hour after one has drunk it ; the rest of the day one has to walk about very much, to avoid going to sleep, which is very dangerous after dinner.”

The walks were limited in extent. “There are nothing but rocks, whichever way you turn,” and rocks were not compatible with the high-heeled foot-gear of the period.

“The finest promenade is a tree-planted square with avenues of lime-trees. In front is a house where society gathers on fine evenings at five o’clock, and plays till eight, which is supper-time. One must be careful to be very sober at this repast, as a régime is one of the most necessary things when one is taking the waters.”

To make up for the boredom which he had undergone at Carlsbad, the Baron, when his cure was over, betook himself to Prague, for some of those grand court ceremonies in which his soul delighted.

The Emperor Charles VI was much occupied in endeavouring to secure the succession of the eldest of his two daughters, Maria Theresa, to his hereditary dominions, planning, in fact, what is called the Pragmatic Sanction, which he hoped to induce all the Great Powers to sign. The Diet of Hungary, as we have already seen, had sworn fealty to its future Queen. Charles and his wife were now about to be crowned King and Queen of Bohemia, in order that the succession might be passed on in due time.



Pöllnitz arrived at the capital of the Czechs the day before the magnificent entry of the Imperial pair, which was followed by the usual court fêtes. He saw all the sights of the city, noting especially the fine *hôtels* of the Bohemian nobles, and enjoyed himself at Prague.

“The Bohemians are the pleasantest people in the world, and Prague one of the cities of the Empire where one can best choose one’s society. The ladies are agreeable. Play, which one may call the universal amusement, can be carried to any length one wishes in the houses of the aristocracy, where each evening a company collects of either sex. . . . There was a passable Italian opera; in winter splendid sleigh-drives; much masquerading, one dances oneself out of breath; and there are public balls which are very well arranged, and could be compared to the Haymarket balls in London, if anything could be compared with them. . . . In the summer the meeting-place is in Prince Schwarzenberg’s garden, where one plays, talks, and walks. Then to some house to supper. . . . In the country-houses one is very well entertained . . . hunting of all kinds. Many nobles have packs of hounds, others have shooting. Most of them have a band—for the Bohemians are very musical—so that whatever the weather is, one is amused; besides, one enjoys a complete liberty.”

But, after spending some time at Prague and finding that the coronation would not take place for a while, Pöllnitz decided to leave. For—

“The outlay I was making at Prague was very great, and I considered that, if I stayed there any longer, it would no longer be in my power to carry out the arrangements I had made. I had left Berlin with a large sum, and my plan was that, as I was now in a position to do so, I should satisfy all those from whom I had borrowed money.”

## CHAPTER XXIII

PÖLLNITZ began the meritorious work of paying his debts by appeasing his "mad dogs" in Holland.

He went by way of Cleves and Nijmegen. Thence to Rhenen—

"Four or five leagues on narrow, winding dykes, very broken by wet weather. The road seemed made for the destruction of the human race, especially as I had a stupid coachman, shying horses, and so was in danger of breaking my neck, for in Holland public conveyances are made to upset easily. Whoever invented them must have studied what was most uncomfortable and best adapted to kill people. Imagine a cursed chariot enormously high, one mounts by an iron ladder, placed between the wheels, which are at most two feet apart. The body is covered with wooden trellis like an arbour, which is covered with oil-cloth, and is so low that, at the least jolt, one knocks against the top. This infernal machine, doubtless invented for the entry of Persephone to Hades, instead of a pole has a hook, with a raised end, by which the coachman, generally drunk, guides the carriage by leaning one foot upon it, while he holds on with the other to the neck of one of his horses, which almost touch the chariot. In this fearful shandrydan eight people are seated, who, as the height of abomination, make such a noise that every head whirls."

In the province of Utrecht he passed many châteaux, which were also to be found in Gelderland and Overijssel, he heard, as land is not so dear in these less fertile parts.

Leyden University much impressed him.

“ There are at this moment three great professors here : Vitriarius for law, Boerhaven for medicine, and S’Gravesande for mathematics. The first-named, by his learning and his way of lecturing, attracts to Leyden all the young nobility from Bohemia and Austria. Of all the Protestant Universities, excepting those of England, I know of none where the students are less dissipated and noisy than at Leyden. There is no town so suitable for studying in ; there is no squandering, one is at the fountain-head for books, and living is not dear. The students do not pride themselves, as in Germany, on their magnificence in dress ; many are hardly ever out of a dressing-gown, which is the favourite costume of the townsfolk. It made me think that there was some epidemic prevalent in the town.”

Pöllnitz went on to The Hague and stayed there till February.

“ I first paid a call on my dear Pyll, who had behaved so well to me that I felt I must satisfy her first. I then made many little payments on one side or the other, and soon cleared off the debts I had contracted in this country, and, finding myself still with my purse well lined, I spent my time as well as I could in this most brilliant Court. My debts paid off in Holland, the ease with which I set in order my other obligations farther away gave me a peace of mind such as I had not enjoyed for a long time ; and so, without having as yet any settled position, I found it was a pleasant thing to be a man who owes nothing.”

At The Hague Pöllnitz found many cousins, descended, like himself, from Maurice of Nassau.

“ Of all the blood of Nassau-Orange, of the Prince who founded the Republic, only one young Prince remains, the Stadtholder of Frisia, besides the Counts of Oувverkerke, Zeist, Laleck—of the left hand.”

Society at The Hague was good. It—

“Was the easiest place in Europe to make acquaintances. . . . Assemblies, plays, promenades. . . . The Voorhout on summer evenings full of the coaches of the *beau monde* . . . the drive to the sea at Scheveningen along fine avenues paved with bricks, and bordered with a double line of yew-trees cut pyramid shape. . . . Charming walks every way, and even inside the town. . . .”

Society was cosmopolitan at The Hague. There were, besides the ambassadors of many nations, “my lady d’Albemarle,” widow of the Count of that name, page to William of Orange. She was the first lady at The Hague. The Lieutenant-General of the States, Keppel, made a great show, and had a brilliant house. “My lady Cadogan,” widow of the Duke of Marlborough’s faithful friend, and mother of the Duchess of Richmond, the favourite of Charles II, lived at The Hague, as did also Pöllnitz’s old acquaintance the Countess Wartenberg, turning night into day and day into night, her house always open to foreign visitors, and very high play there. She said of herself that it was easier to count the shells on the beach at Scheveningen than for her to count her lovers. But she had now lost all her beauty, and had become coarse in looks and manners. She died at The Hague, lonely and neglected, her funeral followed only by a few servants.

During this visit of Pöllnitz to The Hague much alarm was caused in Holland by a plague of worms gnawing the dykes which protected the lowlands from the sea. It was hoped that the ice might stay their damage, but in the meantime the States ordered public prayers, and forbade any theatrical performances. Yet there were plenty of actors, and more than one opera company. A serious-minded Jew had sent for one of these from Paris, in order to oppose the comedies when the theatres were open. An Anabaptist, zealous for comedy, supported the theatre. All The Hague sided with one or the other party.



“ It showed,” says Pöllnitz, “ the footing on which Jews are here. The Portuguese Jews are very generous ; they make a great display, are admitted to the Assembly, entertain largely, give much in charity ; in fact, only differ from others in that they go to synagogue.”

Amsterdam interested the Baron greatly, though, aristocrat to his finger-tips, Pöllnitz did not approve of the Republic and of the republican taste and bourgeois tone of—

“ This modern Tyre, this mistress of trade, this shop of the world . . . her edifices, sacred and profane, are fine enough ; but also, to speak frankly, they are somewhat bourgeois in taste, which one does not find in the buildings in Venice and Genoa, where taste is more refined because the nobles govern. Amsterdam is the only town in the world which can be compared in any way with Venice ; for, though it is not built like the latter, in the middle of the sea, it is also built on piles. Like Venice, it is composed of a quantity of islands, and the principal streets are canals ; with this advantage, that they are edged with wide quays planted with trees, whilst at Venice the water is only confined by the houses themselves. That is, I think, the only resemblance between these two rivals of commerce ; for, as for the beauty of the buildings, there is no comparison at all ; a Grand Canal and a Canale Reggio are worth more in this respect than all Amsterdam. There, there are palaces ; here there are houses, clean, neat, pretty, without architectural style and built of brick.”

Mediæval style did not appeal to eighteenth-century taste.

“ In old days the manner of building of the Amsterdam folk was most extraordinary. Most of the old houses still left are mounted on stilts. The front of the first

floor above the ground-floor is usually all windows, separated by pillars of wood, which support the masonry of the other floors, happily very light, for it is unusual for a wall to be more than two bricks thick, and the ceilings are nothing but planks ; so that one has the advantage of not being able to speak on the first floor without being heard on the second floor. I will not criticise the arrangement of the rooms, though, in truth, the architects do not understand anything about it, nor of how to set up the chimneys, which nearly all smoke. It is true that the inhabitants are not much troubled about this, and could as well do without them. (This mode of life applies only to the people, and not to persons of a certain rank, or to some of the merchants.) The women warm themselves all day long with a peat which they place into a little earthenware pot and put under their petticoats, where they sit on them as a hen does on her chickens. The men, when at home, are always in dressing-gowns lined with flannel and wrapped up in two or three thick jackets. If the cold is very severe they also use a *stoof*, as the heater is called which I have just said the ladies use ; or else they warm themselves in the kitchen, where there is never too much bustle to prevent one getting near the hearth ; and I wager that there are many people comfortably off who only put the soup-pot on once a week. No nation is so badly fed as the Dutch : butter, milk, cheese, salt fish, are their usual dishes.

“ But I am getting away from my subject, their manner of building. I do not know how such lightly built houses can hold together : therefore there are some which have a bending appearance, which I prefer more in a *danseuse* than in a house. A good many have lately been restored. One of these gables, like a sugar-loaf, has unfortunately fallen down, and killed three people passing in the street. The Government, very anxious to avoid any accident, has ordered the landlords to pull down these sloping pyramids, and one is no longer in danger of having one’s head broken, and the

town is all the finer. Their principal decoration is window ; there is no country which has such fine glazing, and in many houses the panes are of very good glass. In the palaces of Venice and Genoa the painting and the gilding of the ceilings alone are worth more than the finest house in Amsterdam. I do not deny that there are houses here on the building of which no expense has been spared ; but usually they are small ; none have more than five windows in front, others four, and the most only three. One enters by steps of a sort of marble, or black stone. In houses of the usual size one finds a narrow hall with a floor of white marble, and often the walls are panelled to a certain height with it." (Does Pöllnitz allude to Dutch tiles ?) "The house usually consists of two rooms on the ground-floor, a little courtyard beyond, a second detached building only one room deep, with a view into the garden. At Venice or Genoa a merchant (I do not take noblemen into account) would have at least an apartment of three or four rooms. At Amsterdam the furniture is cleaner, in Italy finer. Here there will be a fine Flemish tapestry, a small room with pictures, fine mirrors, a quantity of china and beautiful knick-knacks from India ; the floor will be covered with a fine Persian carpet, but you will not find furniture upholstered in velvet, embroidered with gold, chandeliers of rock-crystal, abundance of pictures, of antique busts, of vases, of statues in marble and bronze. Finally, I will tell you, to wind up this long comparison, that if the Italian palaces were as clean as the Amsterdam houses they would be unsurpassed, and if the houses at Amsterdam were as neglected as those in Italy no one would look at them.

"However small a house is here, there is always one room not lived in, and it is the best room in the house. It is a Sanctuary of which the head maid-servant in the house is the High Priestess. She has such respect for this reserved spot, that she never enters it without taking her shoes off for fear of soiling the floor, for which they have such a veneration that they devote a sort of





WINTER IN HOLLAND.  
From the Collection of A. M. Broadley.





worship to it ; it is the *lares penates*, and you draw down upon yourself the indignation of the mistress of the house and of the maids if you have not as much respect for their floors as they have. Before entering a house, you must wipe your feet well on a mat you find outside the door ; then you must not spit, even if you should choke, unless you find a little utensil full of sand intended for this purpose ; you must let nothing fall that can stain it, otherwise I will not answer for it, that the Priestess does not immolate the delinquent to their idol, and that the fable of Orpheus and the Bacchantes is not brought to life again. On certain days of the year the Priestesses allow their masters to enter the Sanctuary, and even to receive company there ; but the next day this spot, which is called in the language of the country *Beste Kamer* (the fine room), is washed and purified as our churches are when they have been profaned. I do not exaggerate when I say that there are rooms which I am sure are not opened more than four times a year, unless it be to air the furniture. It is the same with thousands of beautiful things in Amsterdam, which are not used for fear of spoiling them. People live in the midst of abundance and riches, without any satisfaction from them. However, for the last few years they begin to enjoy life somewhat ; they launch out into carriages, furniture, into country excursions, and their wives into dress and furniture. The old people exclaim at the new habits ; they say the Republic is on the down-grade. In that they resemble one of our Emperors, who, noticing that his Equerry had changed the rope-traces which were in use at Court for better ones, exclaimed : ‘ that luxury would ruin his family and his State.’

“ Amsterdam is as large as Naples, five hundred thousand inhabitants. Its situation is one of the marvels of the world. It is built on such low ground that it would be in constant danger if the people had not made embankments as high as the waves which always seem ready to overwhelm it.”

The gently flowing Amstel, the fine bridges, the canals, brick-edged and bordered with lime and elm, the shining doorsteps, the glistening big windows—all excited his admiration, and especially the clean streets.

“ They are carefully washed once a week. Apropos of that I will tell you that there is no place where washing is in so much favour as Amsterdam ; every week they never miss washing the interior of the house, and all the cooking utensils, so that the washing is never-ending. Indeed, otherwise everything would grow mouldy and spoil. But I think that, unless they were obliged to wash, the Dutch would not waste time over it, for otherwise I have not seen them plume themselves upon cleanliness. The gentlemen wear a shirt fifteen days, under a greasy, very disgusting woollen jacket. Their manner of eating is not very clean. Mostly they know of no other forks than their fingers, with which they fish for salad swimming in vinegar, which is usually their favourite dish.”

The Town Hall, though its seven porticoes were too narrow, Pöllnitz thought the finest public building. He saw over the dungeons, in the adjoining vaults to the Treasury, “ very clean, well lighted, the prisoners less ill-treated than elsewhere ; they are fed, and not left lying in filth.” (!)

The busy life of the merchant on 'Change in the Square struck him much. “ To see them running to and fro all over this Square, there is no one in the world but would take them for madmen.”

The Admiralty was a little town to itself. The seventy men-of-war were superior to those of the Venetians, and there were materials to build more. He admired the India House, a great building—

“ Full of spices, masses of valuable things. I was embalmed like a mummy after an hour's walk through it.

A corpse put there would not decay, joking apart. The India Company is a Republic in a Republic; appoints and dismisses officers and soldiers. In the Indies the Governor lives better than his masters here. One might say to a director of the Company, 'I wish you may one day be Governor in Batavia,' as a Neapolitan lady wished at Madrid to Philip the Fourth, that he might be one day Viceroy of Naples.

"I did not see the House of Correction or any of the numerous Hospitals, because I have a great dislike of prisons, and the name of a hospital alarms me. I see I am going there fast, and it will be time enough to see it when I take up my abode there.

"Since it began to freeze I hold my assizes on the ice to see the skaters slide—a favourite exercise of the Dutch, which they do marvellously well. Their skates are rather thin little pieces of wood, smooth as knitting-needles, except where the heel and the flat of the foot should rest, which is a little wider. The rest is thin, and turned up at the end, so that the iron below may the more easily break through snow and avoid irregularities and obstacles. Thus one goes very regularly, but not without danger of breaking one's arms or one's legs or of drowning. The Dutch learn to skate before they can walk. It is the amusement of the common people, and of the very young. Adults and gentlefolk go in sleighs as we do, called here 'Narren,' meaning to behave as a fool. It seems true.

"On the Amstel outside the Utrecht gate several thousand people run on skates so fast that they seem to fly. If one of these were to appear in Switzerland, he might share the fate of Brioché, the marionette-player, and be burnt as a wizard by the Helvetians.

"The skaters are a great resource to me, as I am very bored in this town. It is not the place for those who are not in business. The foreign visitor does not know what is to become of him. His only refuge is a dull café, or the promenade. In the first, one is smoked out, or deafened by the poor remarks on the newspapers,



on the price of pepper and ginger ; in the other, one is alone.

The play is a poor resource for those who do not know the Dutch language, which, like our own, is not suited to the drama. The actors are pitiable, the dresses bad, the scenery good, and the theatre large and fine. I do not know why the Magistrates will not allow French comedy to be played in this town. It appears to me that it would do more good than harm, would polish up the young men, and keep them from dissipation, which idleness and the difficulty of knowing where to spend the evenings lead to. D'Argenson, when he was Head of the Police, told me that there were more disorders and debauchery in Paris during the fortnight at Easter when the theatres were closed, than in four months when they were open. It would soon be the same at Amsterdam, where the lazy young men, with parents, blind in their kindness, always ready to kill the fatted calf, are left to themselves ; they are usually educated with little principle, and abandon themselves to excesses, the result of passion. These youths prefer driving a chaise to all other forms of exercise ; they wish to play the dandy. You can imagine how they set about it.

"The assemblies in society are not attractive. The faces are pretty, but the owners will not say a word, at least to a stranger. One takes tea, a turn at ombre or quadrille, and then one seeks for supper.

"Parties where there are no ladies are even duller. You smoke and drink a great deal, discuss trade or politics, and then wish bad luck to the Powers who have prevented useless Dutch goods going into their States !

"The only remedy against idleness is reading. Amsterdam is the centre of booksellers, officious booksellers, who lend books to people like myself, who cannot burden themselves with a library. I divide my time between reading, the café, and the promenade ; but the walks are far off. . . . The canals here make nice walks, because the banks are planted ; but the pavement

is unpleasant. The view from the bridge which joins the embankment of one side of the Amstel to the other, and which is six hundred and sixty feet long, by seventy-five feet wide, is comparable to the Pont Royal at Paris.

"There are two synagogues here, one for Portuguese and one for German Jews. Both are Jews, but they differ in heart and feelings. The first are the less ugly; they wear their beards tidily trimmed, and are well-mannered people. I saw one who was a good-looking young man, and a dandy. He had been brought up a Christian, and seemed a faithful one; but when he was in Paris, in the suite of an ambassador, he fled, and came to Amsterdam, where he Judaized as if he had never heard our Lord named.

"Whenever I went into society in Holland I was looked upon as a curiosity. Yet I am not a dandy, and my face evokes nothing but indifference. The Fair Sex in this country is very handsome; the peasants have the complexions of ladies; the country beauties are all fair, with an indolent look, as if they would not refuse their heart to a young swain who asked it. For me, who am no longer of an age for adventures, I contented myself with admiring these nymphs."

Pöllnitz thought the Dutch so honest and straightforward and friendly—unless they had to open their purses. He got on excellently with them. "If you treat them well, they do what you like. As Charles V said: 'You must speak fair words to the Dutch, leave them a shadow of liberty, but make them pay up well.' " They are miserly, but, on the other hand, charitable, and wish people to be able to live. They do not possess "that which to-day outweighs everything—a brilliant intellect," but he thought that they had plenty of good common sense.

Often, in the canal boats, he listened to conversation, and was surprised to hear how the common people talked, of trade, of the interests of the State, of other countries, of manners of other nations, of the history of

their own land, far more intelligently, perhaps, than the epigram-makers, the weavers of *rondeaux* and *bouts-rimés*, did elsewhere.

The people can be insolent, but, if a stranger does not annoy them by his haughtiness, they will not come out of their phlegm.

“ They do not fleece the stranger, except in a hole like Hallevoetsluis, or at Rotterdam, where one Carpentier, a French refugee, keeps the tavern ‘ Maréchal de Turenne,’ but not in good towns. If a visitor will be human, and live at a *table d’hôte*, he will know what he is spending. The ordinary is by rule ; wine, lodging, are a fixed price. Only supper makes a breach in your purse. Carriages by land and water are charged for, except in the ice season.”

Pöllnitz went to Haarlem, where the only thing he noticed was a sort of rosette of muslin trimmed with lace, which his guide pointed out to him tied to some of the doors. “ It was a mark that a woman was lying-in in the house, and her husband is therefore entitled to the privilege of not being arrested for debt during the six weeks that his wife is laid up.”

At Saardam he saw thousands of windmills at work, sawing wood. “ The wide trousers of the people would make a coat for other nations. They wear huge silver buttons, and the women gold and silver jewelry.”

In Pöllnitz’s time the national dress was still the rule. He knew a young man whose father refused to recognize him because he came on the Bourse at Amsterdam in French clothes.

END OF VOL. I









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